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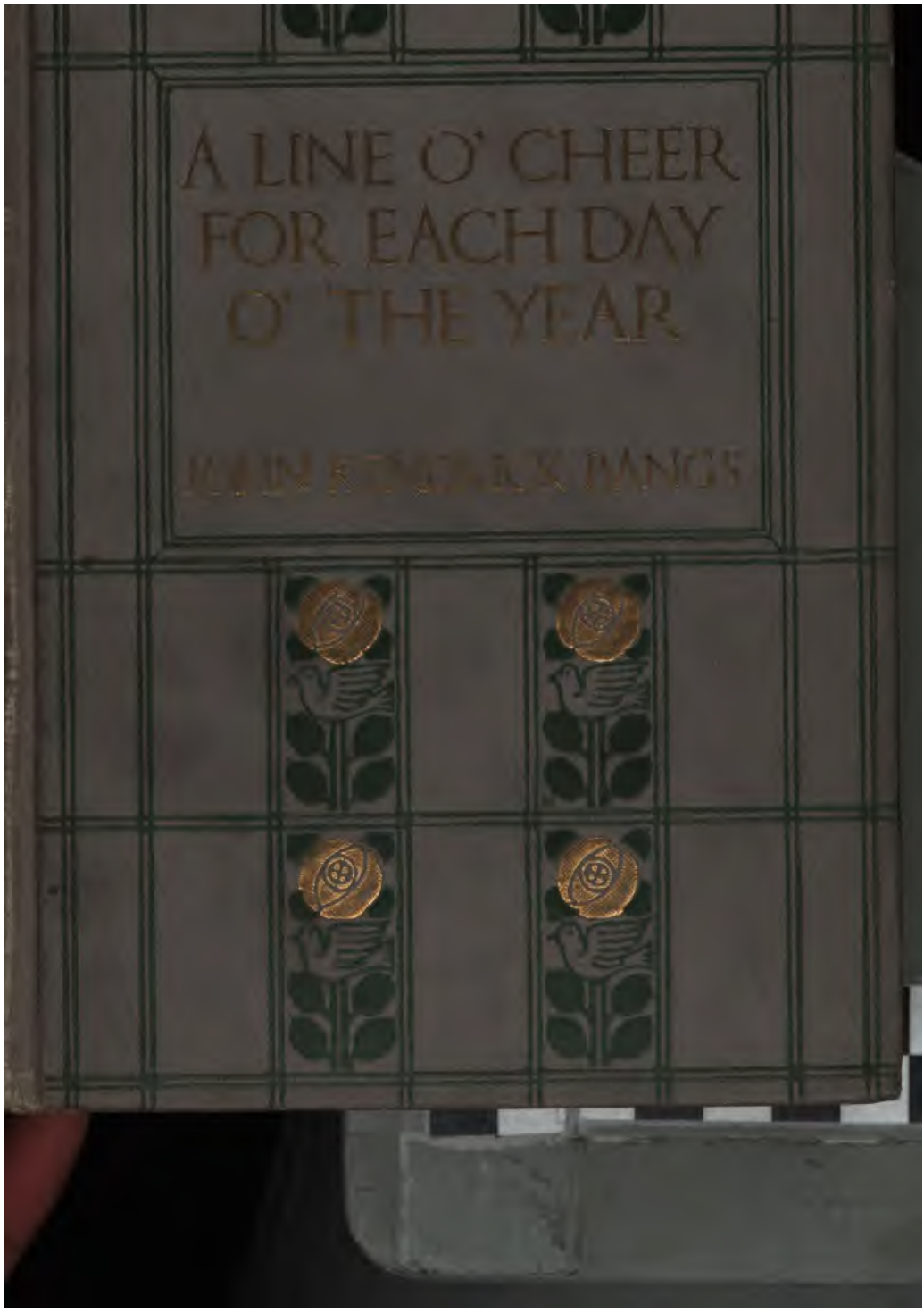
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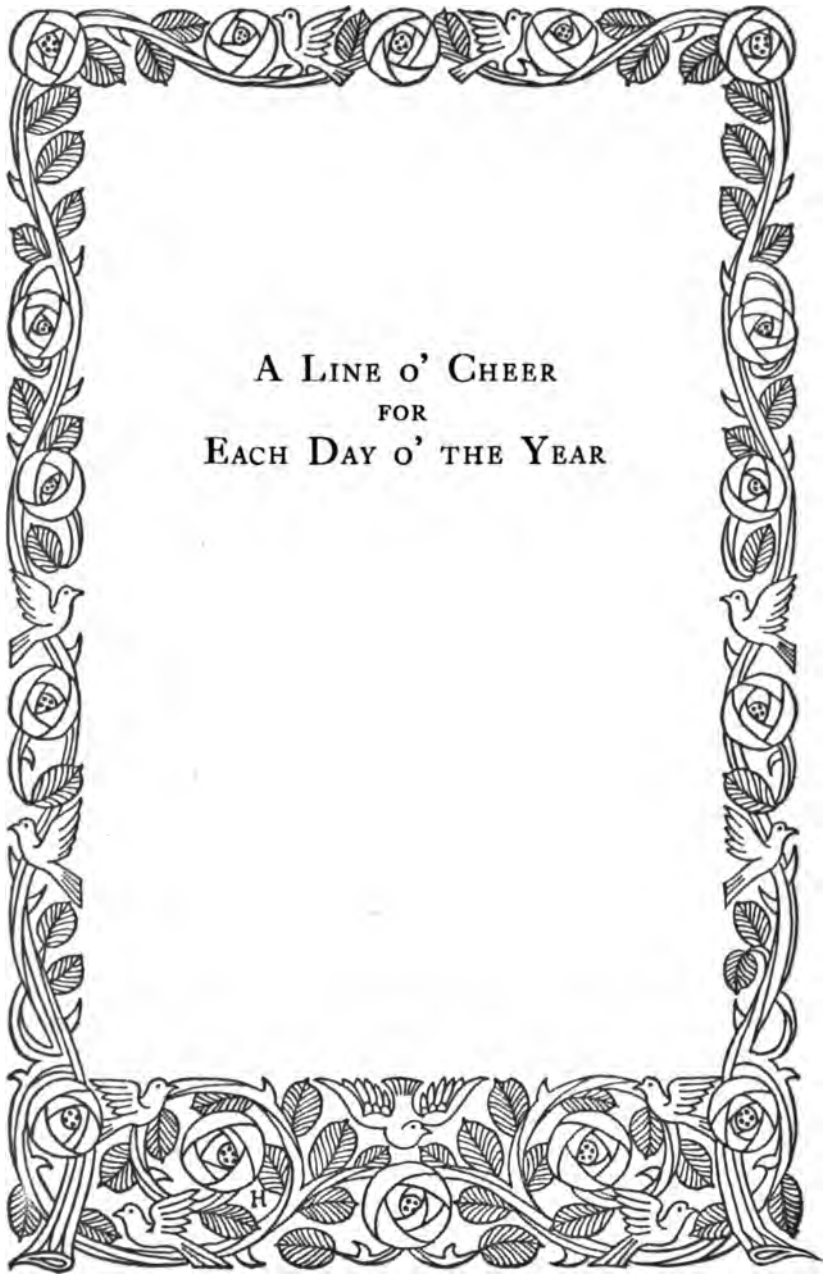
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A LINE O' CHEER
FOR EACH DAY
O' THE YEAR



A Line o' Cheer
for
Each Day o' the Year



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for
Each Day o' the Year

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for
Each Day o' the Year

By
JOHN KENDRICK BANGS



Boston
Little, Brown, and Company
1913

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
20124B
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
B 1930 L

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Published, September, 1913

Printers
S. J. PARKHILL & CO., BOSTON, U. S. A.



To My Son

FRANCIS HYDE BANGS

WD 19 FEB 90

January 1

THE BOOK OF DAYS

Another Book of Days has come to me.
What story shall its pages fair reveal
When this New Year hath ceased at last to be,
And Time hath turned again his whirring wheel?

May every day tell of some goodly deed
Of kindness for my fellowmen fulfilled,
Of thoughtfulness for them that stand in need,
With faith and ready charity instilled.

May ne'er a blot its virgin whiteness mar,
No faithless thought appear in any line,
And steadfast as some everlasting star
May love eternal through its pages shine.

THE PRICE

That "all men have their price," a Cynic
saith,
And it is true, but not a price in gold.
Some sell themselves for LOVE, and some for
FAITH,
And some for HELPFULNESS themselves have
sold.
Who sells himself for dross
Wins but a meed of loss,
But he who barters all his HEART and MIND,
To ease a Sorrow, or some deed in kind,
Hath got a worthy price in man's GOOD-WILL
That serves him best in days of his own ill.

DELIVERANCE

I never knew a night so black
Light failed to follow on its track.
I never knew a storm so gray
It failed to have its clearing-day.
I never knew such bleak despair
That there was not a rift, somewhere.
I never knew an hour so drear
Love could not fill it full of Cheer!

AS TO FAITH

Who waits to prove his Faith before believing
But loses stores of wheat he might be sheaving,
And in the end a loser poor comes out
Since all his Faith is builded up on Doubt!

LOVE'S BLINDNESS

They say Love 's blind, and cannot clearly see
What he is at, or where he 'll shortly be;
Yet where a Heart lies open, and awake,
And waiting patiently for Love's own sake,
Blind though he is, he goes unerringly,
Nor needs a guide by night or day
To point the way!

AS TO CLOUDS

Clouds may be dark,
Clouds may be gray,
But listen — hark —
I 've learned to-day
No Cloud yet seen
In all the list
But it hath been
Just made of — MIST!

ROUTED

When Trouble comes upon the scene
Just greet him with a smiling mien,
And make him feel that he 's the style
Of friend you 've wished for all the while.
If thus you do he will not stay,
But soon departing on his way
Will flee your hearth at maddest pace,
For Trouble hates a smiling face!

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THE GAINER

A Beggar gray told me to-day
A story most appealing,
And then and there what I could spare
I gave him for his healing.

They later told me I was sold,
And I was much derided,
But what if he did "bunco" me?
He lost far more than I did!

I thought I had the pleasure glad
Of giving where 't was needed;
And if he lied, why me deride?
I gained much more than he did.

A WINTER THOUGHT

Straight through the chill of winter days
As clear as anything,
Through all the murk, and misty ways,
I see the coming spring.

And clear above the noisy swell
Of winter's arctic blast,
I hear the bird-notes sweet that tell
Of June days come at last.

Old Winter's ways speak not of rue
To me, things drab and gray —
They point the path that leads us to
The flowers of the May!

THE ALTERNATIVE

The future holds two possibilities —
More living in some realm of mysteries
Wherein as here to prove
How we may rise to loftiest heights, with Love
The test;
Or just a sweet and everlasting rest,
With ne'er
A hint of sordid things, of pain, nor any care!

January 11

A CONSOLING THOUGHT

If you have faults, grieve not!
Let this thought keep you warm:
Who hath no faults hath got
No hope for a Reform!

A PARADOX OF NOTHING

He nothing had, yet Opportunity
Came by and robbed him of his Poverty.
'T is thus we see, despite accepted views,
Who Nothing hath hath Something yet to lose!

SECURE

Whatever Creditors may seize
They cannot take our Memories.
No cloud so dark can ever rise
As to obscure to faithful eyes
The vision of the treasure-trove
Of Youth and unforgotten Love.

TWO WORLDS

The world without
Is fine, no doubt,
With treasures fair to win;
But as for me
I look with glee
Upon the world within.

The treasures there
Beyond compare
A Fortune vast combine —
Faith, Hope, and Health,
And Love's own wealth,
And every bit is — MINE!

ACHIEVEMENT

The climb is hard, the way is steep.
The path is rough and hard to keep.
The goal is far, and foes deride
The Traveler on every side.
Yet, day by day, and night by night,
We nearer draw unto the height,
Until at last the dawning sun
Shines on the prizes nobly won;
And all the strife, and vain regret,
By which the journey was beset
Forgotten lie amid the haze
Of fast receding Yesterdays.

A SAFE RETREAT

Keep a chamber in your heart
Given o'er to Cupid's art,
And whatever comes your way
Spend some time there every day.
'T is a method I am sure
That will hold your Youth secure.

DETERMINATION

What I WILL must surely be;
What I WISH FOR I shall see;
What I 'D HAVE must come to me —
If I WILL and WISH aright,
And keep at it day and night
Till at last it heaves in sight,
And, according to my habit,
I 'VE THE NERVE TO GO AND GRAB IT!

THE WRINKLED CHEEK

A wrinkled cheek I 'll not despise,
But rather prize!
'T is but the Chart of Sorrow sore
Some troubled Soul has traveled o'er,
And calls to me
Not for Contempt, but Sympathy.

IN THE MIDST OF NIGHT

I joy in brilliant days,
 Yet, in some ways,
I take most rare delights
 In starless nights,
Wherein in happy dreams
I travel spectral streams,
 And see strange sights;
 And now and then
 Encounter men
Of Fame of other times,
 And other climes.
 But, best of all,
I hold high festival
With Friends for whom my tears
Were shed in Yesteryears!

A COMFORTING THOUGHT

When on some wintry day I 'm caught
'Twixt arctic blasts and chill exhausting,
I take much comfort from the thought
That cake is sweeter for the frosting.

THE FALLEN SNOW

The snow hath fallen, and the world
Lies in an icy mantle furled,
The which to some speaks but of ill
And wintry chill.
To me,
Its perfect whiteness, and the glint
Of spotless beauty are a hint
That in a world of flaws, and flecks,
And sorry specks,
There still are stores of Purity,
Unsullied by the stress and strife
Of Life.

THE CALL

I shall not sit, and mope, and sigh,
 Because of winter and the storm,
But forth upon the way I 'll hie
With eager heart to see if I
 Can't make Somebody warm!

The sleet, and chill, and bitter air,
 The blasts that bluster on the lea,
And all the notes of wild despair
Are but the call of Woe and Care
 Sent forth to summon me.

So blow, ye winds from yonder north!
Upon my way I 'll sally forth,
All heedless of your noisy rout,
To do what Service lies without!

IN WORKING DRESS

This cheerless garb, so drab and drear,
In which old Winter doth appear
Is Nature's working-garment gray
In which she labors day by day
Preparing for the Gifts of May,
When Spring the blest
All gaily dressed,
And full of mirth,
Shall make her debut on the earth.
Who hath the eye and ear
E'en now can see and hear
Her happy Elfin throng
Rehearsing all day long
The paeans they will sing
In honor of the new-born Spring!

PROFITABLE CARELESSNESS

Careless what the weather be;
Careless be it dark or fair,
Long as down inside o' me
It is always sunny there —
That 's the Carelessness to free
Careless people of their Care.

THE WINTER PINE

Out there in the sleet and hail
 Through this window-pane of mine
Heedless of the roaring gale
 I can see a noble pine.

Tempests rage, and torrents beat;
 Icy chill besieges, now,
And a weight of frozen sleet
 Bends each overarching bough.

Yet amid the storm and strife
 Quiet, strengthful and serene,
Still it holds its place in life
 Unconcerned, and ever green.

There 's a hint for me, I guess,
In the midst of storm and stress!

WHEN DOUBT APPEARS

When Doubt comes over you and Faith
grows dim,
And Miracles are needed to retrieve
Your Spirit from misgivings dark and grim,
And give new strength to that which you
believe,

Gaze anywhere — North, South, or East or
West —
On leafy trees, or on some lofty height;
On solitudes where all things speak of rest,
Or on the noisy marts by day or night.

Look on the Rose, or on the winter skies;
On harvests sprung from the minutest
seed;
Look deep into some loving mortal's eyes —
And Miracles you 'll find to serve your
need.

BROTHERHOOD

I 'm not my Brother's Keeper,
That fact can't be gainsaid,
Yet may old Time the Reaper
Find me my Brother's Aide!

A GOOD BARGAIN

Who hath a Trouble, let him sell to me.
I 'll gladly take it on and set him free.
My profit? Well, to bear another's stress
Relieves my own, and makes for Happiness.

THE CONQUEROR

To meet Death fearlessly —
 That may not be!
But when the time comes on
 In days anon,
And Death draws grimly near,
 Though filled with Fear
In spite of all may I
 Right bravely die,
And pass those terrors o'er
 A Conqueror.

AS TO SWEETS

Revenge indeed is sweet;
Yet I would here repeat a
Small proverb rather neat —
FORGIVENESS IS MUCH SWEETER!

THE BLINDMAN

The blindest man I 've ever seen
Had eye so bright and vision keen
That he could see a thing of ill
A league beyond a distant hill,
Yet never glimpsed the beauties rare
That lushly bloomed beside his chair.

FEBRUARY GIFTS

Now February's days appear
In somber mien, devoid of cheer —
All cold of eye, and full of cloud,
Beneath the yoke of winter bowed,
Yet spite of all
Her icy pall,
She now and then
Spreads forth for men
Reluctant gifts
Of sunny rifts,
And smiling skies above —
Much as true love
And tenderness
Have potency to ease distress.

A PRAYER

Whate'er we be, or Man, or Woman,
Let 's pray the Lord to keep us human,
And hold us in our mortal pride
A little short of satisfied.

FREE COINAGE

What joy if sunshine were the gold
We stored in massy piles,
And hearts were but the banks that hold
Our currency of smiles!

What bliss indeed to pay our debts,
And put chill Want to flight
By easing Poverty's regrets
With coin of minted light!

IN THE VALE

Fortune sings beneath my window, and her
words are full of lure,
But dear Love is here beside me and his
riches are secure.
Chance doth beckon from the hilltop, and his
promises are rare;
Service holds me in the valley, and I find con-
tentment there.

ALL ABOARD!

Somewhere the sun 's not shining,
And clouds are dark and drear,
With ne'er a silver lining
To mitigate their fear.
Let 's cease our own repining
And hasten there with cheer.

THE UNIVERSAL TONGUE

Talk not to me of Latin, Greek,
Of Russian, French, or Portuguese.
Love's language is the tongue I 'd speak
All thrilled with hope, and joy, and peace.

A language lacking tricks of phrase,
And words portentous, seeming wise,
That hath been used since those far days
When hearts first spoke through mortal eyes.

THE FOUNDATION

Amid life's tribulations,
Amid life's little woes,
I find my consolations
That on great irritations
The strongest nations rose!

SHARING AND BEARING

If so it be you have a joy,
Just go outside and share it,
But if some trouble doth annoy,
Why, sit within
And try to grin
And bear it!

SMILES

Smiles are sovereign remedies
For all sorts of miseries
 That are all our own,
But when others bear a cross,
Suffering some grievous loss,
 They will not atone —
Not unless they chance to be
Smiles of tender sympathy.

THE AVERAGE

I have noticed as I 've run
Through this life of joy and striving
Of ten troubles looked for, one
Has a habit of arriving.

THE FEBRUARY SUN

Look on the sun, and if you can,
Bewail the chillsome lot of Man
When in the sky
You chance to spy
According to kind nature's plan
That universal warming-pan!

ALLEVIATION

It should not, maybe, yet it does
Sometimes in trouble take the curse off,
To think that Some One is, or was,
Or some day, somehow, will be worse off.

BALM

When critics hurt me with their sneer
I find this couplet full of cheer:
Who 's never hit
Is never "IT"!

GOOD WORDS

To have a good word for my neighbor,
To have a good word for my friend,
Involves but a wee bit of labor,
And nothing to boast in the end.

But words that are good for my foeman
And credit for virtues possest —
Now that is a task, sir, that no man
Can find little short of a test
Of his best!

THE GREETING

Who 's lavish with his smiles,
 And niggardly in tears,
Will travel many miles
 Along the Road of Years;
And when the journey 's o'er,
 The smiles of joy elate
He 's spent in days of yore
 Will greet him at the Gate!

GOSSIP

When some one tells a tale of woe
About my neighbor, I 'll receive it;
But even though
I know it 's so,
I 'll merely smile — and not believe it!

A RESOLVE

I 'm going to make To-day so fair
That when it 's gone the usual way
On some To-morrow full of care
'T will make a pleasant Yesterday.

And when the future doth appear
A dreary prospect, bleak and black,
I 'll ease a very present fear
By looking back!

"ALL'S WELL"

You may bind my body fast
To some Post of Misery,
But you 'll find me to the last
Wheresoe'er my lot is cast
In my Spirit free!

Dreams are mine, and hopes likewise.
Mine 's the light to ease my ill.
Mine are all the far-flung skies;
Wheresoever beauty lies
Spirit roams at will.

Bind me, chain me, prison me
In some dark and loathsome cell,
Still my Soul forever free
Rises up exultantly
Crying: "All Is Well!"

THE OPTIMISTIC PESSIMIST

The pessimist who gloats on ill
That is, or is to be to-morrow,
Hath optimistic spirit still,
He takes such joy in things of sorrow!

THE SEED

Down in the darkness of the earth,
In regions void of joy and mirth,
A seed will rest,
By seeming hopelessness of light,
By seeming blackness of the night,
Possessed.

And then from out the wintry grip
All on a sudden it will slip
In Springtime hours
To make on some glad day in May
The prospect beautifully gay
With flowers.

So in my wintry cares! I know,
Despite the chill of present woe
That holds me fast,
I 'm but an earth-bound seed, and I
Shall find the dawn of victory
At last!

ON DUTY

Now what of the sleet?
And what of the hail?
And what of the fleet
Tempestuous gale?

O what of the chill,
The ice and the snow,
And all of this ill
And bluster and blow?

That 's what Winter 's for.
It must be confest
That though he 's a bore,
He 's doing his best!

A DEMONSTRATION

Cold is nothing! Demonstrate it?
Like two twos when put together —
When 't is coldest wise folks rate it
As a bit of zero weather,
And a zero, don't you see,
Equals nothing — Q. E. D.
When the bitter blasts are storming,
May you find this notion warming!

ALONGSIDE

Perhaps there 's nothing you can do
To ease the other fellow's rue.
But there 's no harm at least to stand
In silence by, and press his hand,
And let him know in his despair
That though you 're helpless — you are there!

SATISFACTION

Aim high! E'en though the target is not hit,
Your arrow, speeding to and from the height,
In rise and fall, there 's no denying it,
Can't help but have a satisfying flight.

SWIMMERS ALL

Life 's a sea, and we 're all swimmin',
Boys and girls, and men and women.
Tempests rage, and skies are clouded,
In a black mist oft enshrouded;
Water 's deep, and waves are towerin',
Current 's sometimes overpowerin';
Hard to fight 'em single-handed,
And sometimes perhaps we 're stranded;
But somewhere, the voyage ended,
Waits a harbor fair and splendid,
Holding peace and rest to free
All the swimmers of the sea.

A GOODLY QUEST

Never had a rumpus yet
 Did n't find some good behind it
If I took the care to get
 In the mood where I could find it.
Anyhow, whate'er the score,
Good is well worth lookin' for!

FULFILLMENT

I can't be what Shakespeare was!
I can't do what great folks does!
But, by Ginger, I can be
Me!
And among the folks that love me
Nothin' more 's expected of me!

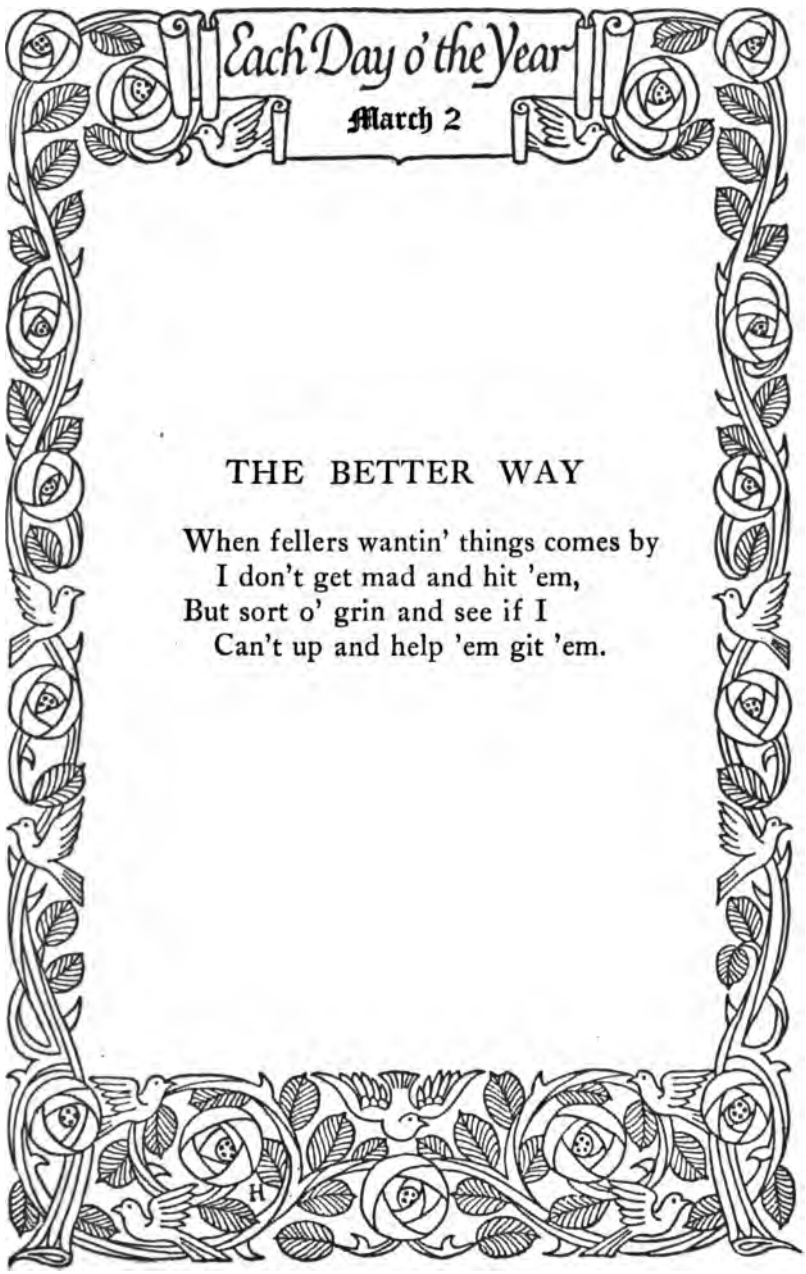
THE NEARER STEP

To-day was bleak as it could be,
And yet my heart doth sing,
Because you see
It marked to me
Another step toward Spring.

Another step toward roses fair,
And smiling skies above,
And bird-notes rare,
And in the air
The sense of new-born love.

GOOD OLD MARCH

Cometh March all brag and bluster,
Full of frills, and fuss, and fluster,
But for all his blatant bragging
And his cold and windy nagging,
I can see he 's only fooling,
And his threatenings are drooling.
For beneath his noisy keening
Coming Springtime is a-greening,
And I know despite his ruffing,
Good old March is merely bluffing.
He is only rudely trying
Thus to comfort Winter, dying.



THE BETTER WAY

When fellers wantin' things comes by
I don't get mad and hit 'em,
But sort o' grin and see if I
Can't up and help 'em git 'em.

AS TO HEAVEN

Heaven is a place so fair
That no grief can enter there.
Well, for me I 'll choose a place
Where, when Sorrow shows his face,
There 's enough of Love about
Handily to drive him out.

Give me this, and 'spite the ill,
I shall have my Heaven still!

A PHILOSOPHER

I hain't ez smart ez some folks is,
That fact is plain to see,
But then there 's other folks in biz
That hain't ez smart ez me!

And so, without no ondue pride,
I 'm feelin' sorter satisfied.

THE SHUT-IN

I 'm anchored fast — no trips for me
To distant lands across the sea,
And yet I find a certain sort
Of comfort lying safe — in port!

PRIDE OF BIRTH

Now pride of birth is very fine!
'T is nice to come of noble line,
And boast a lofty family tree
Decked with a famous ancestry!

I 'm mighty glad to think I 've had 'em
Straight back as far as Father Adam.
Though here and there, I rather fear
The links are not exactly clear,
The fact remains that I am here.
And that is proof enough for me
That I belong upon the tree.

MY FACE

When fust I started on life's race,
I war n't allowed to choose my face.
But as I ran along my way,
I found, by smilin' every day,
I sort o' gave this phiz o' mine
A kind of different design
Than 't would ha' had if I had went
A-yowlin' full o' discontent.

I 'm wuss than plain, but I can keep
My ugliness from strikin' deep!

THE SONG-CURE

If, when things are going wrong,
You will hum some little song,
Just a soft and tender bit
With some melody in it,
Things may not go right again,
But 't will sort of ease the pain,
And you 'll find in your reverse
Naught 's so bad it can't be worse.

MEMORIES

When with tears your eyelids glisten
Just a moment pause, and listen;
Call to mind some childhood day
When your tears were kissed away,
And within your heart you 'll hear
Once again the voice of cheer
Bidding you forget your fear!

Blessed is the memory
Of the voice of sympathy!

COMFORTING

I kain't do much success to win,
But one thing 's sure, through thick and thin
I kin do what I kin!

CHEER UP!

Are you moaning o'er your lot
'Cause of things you have n't got?
Well, look here — I 've made a list
Of the things perhaps you 've missed:
Motor car stuck in the mud
With a dull and sickening thud;
Three months note come due to-day;
Tax-bill overdue to pay;
Patent leather shoes so tight
You can't tell the left from right;
Measles, mumps, and oh, the gout!
Stomach slowly giving out;
Vermiform appendix all
Ready for the Doctor's call;
And a thousand other knocks
Straight from old Pandora's box!
Think of these a little while,
And it may be you will smile
As you contemplate your lot,
And the things you have n't got!

March 12

IN THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION

To beat temptation when you meet it,
Turn on your beat and simply beat it!

WINGS AND WINGS

I envy not the lark, for, though he flies
Upon the morning air up through the skies,
Shut out is he forever from the dells
Wherein the poets weave their magic spells
That send the Soul of Man, as if on wings,
On flights of Spirit, far from earthly things.
'T were well to soar the heavens, but for me
The Spirit Realm on Wings of Poesie!

THE WITTY MAN

"Brevity's the soul of wit!"
So the Sages do report,
Which is why I smiling sit
When my purse is running "short."
He that laughs at poverty
Hath a wit that pleaseth me.
'T is the sort beyond a doubt
That some day will help him out!

THE BLUSTERER

March all bluster threatens much
With his loud and windy touch,
But when one looks underneath
All this showing of his teeth,
All his howl and braggart jeer,
There 's not really much to fear.
'Neath his growling all the while
There 's a sort of springy smile!

A NEW THOUGHT

I rather think to get somewhere
I 'll so direct my labors
That I can meet those standards rare
I set up for my neighbors.
I wonder, as I think it o'er,
I never thought of that before!

A ST. PATRICK'S DAY RESOLVE

Just as St. Patrick drove the snakes
 Away from good old Erin,
I think I 'll drive out all the fakes
That with my soul play ducks and drakes:
Intolerance of friends' mistakes,
 A habit harsh of jeerin';

Unkindly thoughts; a tendency
 To sham and empty blarney;
A lack of ready sympathy
For those in need of charity;
Until my spirit freed will be
 As green as fair Killarney!

THE LURE AND THE LAUREL

Opportunity, they say,
 Knocks upon the outer door;
Beckons us to come away
 Unto Fortune's golden shore.

Many rise, and many go,
 Where his beckoning shall lead,
Finding at the last but woe
 Waiting on the daring deed.

Others, heedless of his call,
 Heedless of his golden snare,
Stay within, and after all
 Find the richest laurels there.

WISHING AND HOPING

We can't get our every wish
By the act of wishing,
But e'en though there are no fish
There 's some fun in fishing.

So when things are far from bright,
And I 'm merely groping
Through the darkness of the night,
There is joy in hoping.

March 20

A LIVING SONG

Writin' music ain't for me.
I ain't strong on poetry.
But as on my way I go
Through a world of joy and woe
Amblin' steadily along,
I can make my life a song.

THE PLAY

I like to think of Shakespeare's line
 That " all the world 's a stage,"
And we 're but actors in a fine
 Old Drama of our Age.

It makes me feel that when the plot
 Too complicated seems,
My troubles on the whole are not
 Much more than passing dreams.

THE SPEEDER

Crœsus honks along the way
In his motor bright and gay,
Speeding at a fearful pace —
Strained the look upon his face!

Wonder if he races on
Hoping that perchance anon
Somewhere, somehow, he will find
He has left his cares behind?

Better plodding on the road
Than a car with such a load!

OUT OF THE STORM

Your tears flow fast because of woe
 That in your heart you 're fearing?
It matters not! Just let them flow,
The rain falls hardest, don't you know,
 A moment ere the clearing?

WORK A-PLENTY

Time hangs heavy on your hands?
Not a thing to do?
Boredom at your doorway stands
Glowering at you?

Seek the highway with your heart
Filled with tenderness
For the vagrom souls that smart
'Neath some bitter stress.

You will find a task indeed
Waiting for you there,
Where by acts of loving heed
You can conquer care.

DISARMED

Met my enemy to-day —
 Wustest one I ever had.
Shook his hand in genial way;
Smiled upon him bright and gay;
Nary bit did I betray
I was on to him, and say —
 Gee! But he was mad!

A USELESS CURE

The Sages say there 's cure for love
 To make a man forsake it.
By all the stars that shine above
 I vow I 'll never take it!
Love 's not a plaint, pray rest assured,
Of which a wise man would be cured!

A HINT TO REFORMERS

In trying to reform mankind
And cure him of his sinning
First tackle Self — perhaps you 'll find
It makes a tough beginning!

WELL ENOUGH!

You pine for a day that is longer—
Some forty-eight hours, you say?
You think you 'd be better and stronger,
If that were the length of your day?

Not so! Why, dear friend, you 'd be fifty
Years old when you 'd reached twenty-five.
Your legs would be shaky and shifty;
Your heart would be scarcely alive.

It may be I 'm not very sage, sir,
But this is the solemnest truth:
I 'd rather be young in my age, sir,
Than old in the prime of my youth!

IN RAINY WEATHER

When rains drench the hillside and darken
the vale,
And all your good spirits grow weary and
fail,
When every bright prospect seems drowning
in woe —
Pretend you 're a plant, and it 's making you
grow!

March 30

AN IMPRESSION

Thought I saw a snowflake falling
 Through the air to-day —
It was but a white moth calling:
 "Spring is on the way!"
More of winter I was fearing
 As it passed along.
But my heart was shortly cheering
 With its happy song —
Sometimes troubles seem to call
That are n't troublesome at all!

EPITAPH TO MARCH

Here lies old March,
As stiff as starch.
He snowed a lot.
He blowed a lot.
He smiled a bit.
He riled a bit —
But in the end
He was my friend,
Because of his bequest to me
In days, all of them blest to me
For service and for helpfulness
To self and fellows in distress.

April 1

ALL FOOL'S DAY

When April comes with smiles or tears,
Whiche'er they be, I have no fears.
I know that when she smiles 't is best
To go for rainy weather dressed;
And when she weeps her tears foretell
A very pleasant sunny spell —
'T is not for naught in wisdom's schooling
Her birthday 's set aside for fooling!

OMENS

Can't ye see the ice-chains lettin' go the river?
Can't ye feel the touch o' Springtime in the shiver?
Can't ye see the sunbeams climbin' in your room
In the early mornin', killin' off the gloom?
That 's the way with trouble, that 's the way with care.
Like a wintry tempest with its icy snare
All will disappear in spite their threatenin'
If your heart you 'll ope an' let the sunlight in!

THE INIMICAL TRUTH

When some old foe of mine doth rise to say
 Some disagreeable thing to raise a row,
I do not grieve and give my anger play;
 I know full well he means it anyhow.
An ounce of truth spoke by an enemy
Is worth a ton of friendly flattery!

THE JOCUND MILESTONE

When I am walking on the Road
 Of Trouble or of Worry,
And feel the pressure and the goad
 Of an incessant hurry,

I think of an old milestone gray
 One time I found when lost on
An old New England country way,
 Which read: " SIX SMILES TO BOSTON."

Ah, that 's indeed a pleasant thought
 For those of us who travel:
Along the Road of Pain there 's naught
 That " Six Smiles " won't unravel!

ON GROWLING

Feel like growlin'? GROWL! That 's right!
Take your woes and list 'em.
Keep on growlin' day and night
Till you 've driven all the spite
Wholly from your system.

EASTER

When the Easter bells are ringing,
And the early birds are singing,
 Who can think of care?
When the budding flowers are springing,
And their fragrances are flinging
 On the silky air,
Ope your heart and sing away!
All your worries fling away!
Let the glad chimes ring away
 Sorrow and despair!

REACTIONS

There are lots of satisfactions
In the poet's rhymed reactions.
When he wants a rhyme for "tearful"
Nothing goes so well as "cheerful."
When he writes a verse on "trouble"
Nothing helps him more than "bubble";
And the phrase "a night of sorrow"
Plainly hints "a bright to-morrow."
So with us, when trials vex us
Let us think of "solar plexus,"
And with naught of hesitation
Hand it to the visitation.

THE GAME

Yes, the earth is but a sphere,
 Round as it can be,
Flying on year after year
 Through eternity.
As for me, I 've got to take
 What comes, woe and all;
If I thrive, or if I break,
 Keep on playing ball!
Pleasure, pain, or bliss, or care
May my game be on the square.

GALA DAYS

Now here 's a hint for us this morn:
Each day, somewhere, somebody 's born,
And so of course we can't gainsay
Somebody's birthday comes to-day.

Wherefore, 't would be a pleasant plan
To make it joyous as we can,
And celebrate it just as hearty
As though we really knew the party!

AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN

When things are at Sixes and Sevens
It cheers me to think, in my bother,
They might be at Tens and Elevens,
And that is some worse than the other.

MY SKIES

I find my skies
In Love's dear eyes,
And when they dim
With sorrows grim
'T is joy at least to sympathize.

THE IMMORTAL THING

The ships of Troy, her gloried van
That sped the main with pennons high,
Have passed beyond the ken of man
And in some grave forgotten lie.

The songs of Homer, one-time sung
By minstrels of an ancient art,
Still live, and living rank among
The treasures of the human heart.

He buildeth best who builds a song
To fill the soul of man with joy.
Let song be ours, and ships belong
To those who seek the bays of Troy!

THE BLUES

Are you blue? Well, now, see here,
That 's no reason you should mope.
Skies are blue, and it is clear
Their deep azure speaks of hope;
Then the bluebird with his song
Pours out cheer the whole day long!

When the blues come on, you 'll find,
If you 'll try with half a mind,
There are several kinds of blues
Lying round for you to choose;
And your day will be a bright one
If you but select the right one!

HOIST!

Mr. Trouble called to-day.
Met him in a genial way.
Bade him take an easy-chair,
Told him all I knew of Care.

Told him how one time a chap
Dandled long on Fortune's lap
Came a cropper mighty sad
Losing everything he had.

Told him what the very poor
Very often must endure
From the wolves that so beset
Poverty, with pain and debt.

Talked away about distress
For two hours, more or less,
When poor Trouble with a roar
Plunged headfirst out through the door.

MY MEED OF WEALTH

I do not care in wealth to shine —
I want enough for me and mine,
With something over in my store
For the poor stranger at my door.

WHAT USE?

Now what 's the use, my friend, of hating,
And some pet enemy berating?
Life 's all too short for life's best laurels,
Much less to waste on empty quarrels.
I find it leaves more time for living
If I begin each day forgiving.

UNDISMAYED

He bent beneath care's heavy weight —
Yet still he walked with shoulders straight!
In soul appalled by debts piled high —
Hope still flashed brightly in his eye!
Purse low, and prospects drear and dull —
Within his heart beat strong and full,
And though his path was hedged with rue
He held his Courage firm and true!

AS TO PEDIGREE

'T is fine to come of famous pedigree,
And boast a most distinguished family tree,
Provided that the tree is adding height,
And not a shell to feed a parasite.

'T is sad to see a relic of its fruit,
A stunted sapling on a noble root.
Sometimes I think when such come into view
I 'd rather be the seed from which it grew.

THE WORLD

Sometimes the world 's a dreary place,
And we 're inclined to doubt it,
And then the question we must face:
What would we do without it?
Upon the whole, despite its drear,
We should be happy to be here,
And maybe when it seems most sad,
It 's up to us to make it glad.

HOPE ON, HOPE EVER

What bodes your lack of beauty?
 Don't let that vex your mind.
When True Love comes on duty
 He 's almost always blind;
And many and many a woman
 Whose eyes were full of light,
Has doted on a human
 Whose visage was a sight!

THE FAILURE

Now failures are, as I conceive,
No things to weep o'er or to grieve,
But beacon lights to warn us when
We sail too near the rocks again;
Or, better, spurs to urge us on
To surer enterprise anon.

He is a sage who scales the heights
On failures made by other wights,
Provided in his quest for pelf
He 's not already failed himself;
And he who has n't — well, I guess
He 'll never know how sweet success
Can be to him who from a crash
Emerges stronger for his smash.

THE FOUR ESSENTIALS

There is no treasure-trove
Without true Love.
There is no solid wealth
That 's minus Health.
There 's no prosperity
Sans Sympathy,
And Life itself 's a wraith
If lacking Faith.

THE ANSWER

" What 's the good word? "
Now that 's a phrase I truly love to hear,
And when 't is heard,
I always smile and promptly answer
" CHEER! "
It holds more warmth and genial glow
Than any other word I know.

AS TO SELF-MADE MEN

I 've met, O many a self-made man —
 I guess about six hundred odd;
But none of them were better than
 The old-time species made by God.
Indeed, if I were asked I 'd say,
 Though most were first-class imitations,
The old-time pattern still holds sway
 In spite of modern innovations.

TRANSFORMATION

I 've never found by kickin' yet
That I could make a dry day wet;
But I can make a wet day fair
By puttin' on a smilin' air.

WORK FOR ALL

What 's that sigh upon the wind?
Some one with a troubled mind.
What 's that groan upon the street?
Some poor wight with weary feet.
What 's that bent form on the mart?
Wanderer with a broken heart.
Who 's that weeping on my stair?
Some one with a load of care.
Who 's that knocking at my door?
Only these, and nothing more.

And I sit the whole day through
Wishing I had work to do!

HELD FAST

There is a chap whose high regard
I 'm always going to keep.
I do not care a jot how hard
Or rough the path, or steep,
As long as he believes I 'm right
I 'll keep straight on the way
Despite the critics who delight
To harry and to flay.

For if I lose that chap's respect
No matter what I do,
My life will be completely wrecked,
And covered o'er with rue.
No praise of others could atone
The loss of his acclaim,
And e'en the honors of a throne
Would hide a tinsel name.

Who is he? Well, 'twixt you and me
He is the chap I daily see
O' mornings when it comes to pass
I glance into my looking-glass.

IN THE MATTER OF GOSSIP

To gossip I 'd be more inclined
If so be it were always kind.
What could be sweeter than the labor
Of spreading good news of your neighbor?

THE SILVER LINING

When I see my locks of gray
Getting grayer every day,
 And I feel inclined to sigh
 For my youth and days gone by,
Suddenly there comes a call:
SOME FOLKS HAVE NO HAIR AT ALL!

THE SURE ROAD

The surest rud to Happiness
Thet I 've diskivered yit
Is wantin' nuthin' more ner less
Than what I 'm sure to git!

May 1

MAYTIME

Dawns the May with sunny hours,
Blossoms white, and fragrant flowers.
Morning air is sweet with song;
Nature smiles the whole day long;
And the stars that shine by night
With their soft and friendly light
Shedding radiance through the sky
Bid us turn our thoughts on high.

Who can dwell on sorrows gray
In this glad time of the May?

THE LIGHT

All day, all day, I follow the light,
 O'er city, and hill, and dale;
From rosy dawn to the jeweled night
 I joy in the golden trail.

And when at the dusk the light runs on
 And passes beyond my ken,
In Dreamland's valley I rest anon
 And find the bright sun again;

Or if it be that I cannot win
 The sleep that banisheth care,
I turn my vigilant eyes within,
 And lo, the glad light is there!

THE GARDEN

My heart and mind
I daily find
A sort of fertile garden fair,
Where I can play
And work each day
In hope of prizes rich and rare.

I have no doubt
If I weed out
The thorns of malice and untruth,
And plant the seeds
Of helpful deeds,
I 'll reap the Rose of Lasting Youth!

WHAT EACH MONTH BRINGS

What each month brings I 'll keep within my heart
And bid it in my nature do its part;
And as December brings the joys of Yule,
And tells of Man's good-will, and Love's own rule,
So shall the May, with bird-song and with flower,
Transform the world into a vernal bower
That rests at peace beneath a fragrant spell,
And whispers to my soul that all is well.

NEVER TOO LATE

Let 's not be weeping in the sight of wrong,
Nor careless either, greeting it with song,
But if we can, the minute that we sight it,
Hie forth and right it!
Or if perchance we have no power to end it
'T will do no harm to see if we can't mend it.

SCRATCH 'EM!

Don't brood on fancied wrongs — just take
and scratch 'em.
By too much brooding you may chance to
hatch 'em!

PROFIT AND LOSS

His health was lost;
His wealth was lost;
And yet he gained.
For Love remained
And proved itself
The best of pelf
By standing by
When Care drew nigh.
Life holds no loss, or galling chains,
Despair gets little for its pains
If Love remains!

FINANCIAL NOTE

It seems too bad thet I can't borrer
Enough to tide me o'er to-day,
But when I think o' thet to-morrer
That 's sure to dawn three months away,
It sort o' soothes my present sorrer
To think I shall not have to pay
The sums I 'd owe if I could borrer
Enough to tide me o'er to-day.

BETTER THAN WINGS

'T were nice to fly
Up through the sky,
And get away from rushing crowds;
And mid the roar
Of storm to soar
Far up above the dripping clouds.

But all the same,
I love the game
Down on the level of the street,
And 'stead o' wings,
My spirit sings
For sturdy legs and steady feet.

MONEY

Money comes, and money goes.
Where it goes to, goodness knows;
Feeds us, clothes us, pays the rent;
Sometimes borrowed, often lent;
Makes a pleasant, jingly sound;
Rather nice to have around.
But it never kept a friend!
Broken hearts 't will never mend.
As a substitute for Right
Frequently it heaves in sight;
But it is a substitute
That holds mighty bitter fruit.
Misers hoard it; tyrants rule
When they use it for a tool;
And for want of it the roar
Of the Wolf comes to the door.

I will take all I can get
Since it holds me free of debt.
I 'll respect it for its power
To relieve some pressing hour,
But for worship — well, for me
God forbid that that should be!

A CHOICE

If so be you 're inclined to jeer
And greet all things with cynic sneer,
Remember, pray, the Owl, whose hoots
For merry song he substitutes;
Who hates the light,
And lives by night;
And loses all the hours of fun
He might be having in the sun.

If you desire to be an Owl,
Why, go ahead and hoot and scowl,
But don't complain if through the night
You miss the pleasures of the light.

THE TOWN-CRIER

Now that 's a chap I 'd like to see
In every last community.
A sort of Care-and-Trouble-Keeper,
A salaried, official Weeper,
Who 'd come around when things were trying
And for a small fee do our crying!

THE BETTER PLAN

Some men make memoranda of their foes,
The names of folks they 'd like to give the hook;
But as for me, along with other woes
I hold their names, and let my grouches doze,
Hid in a small " Forgetterandum Book."

The world 's been blest no doubt by memories,
But when the things remembered fail to please,
Than Memory o'er strong, 't were truly better
Were we to cultivate a good Forgetter!

OVER YONDER

Over yonder, over yonder,
See the toiling millions wander
Seeking prizes rare!
See them in the depths of worry,
In the hurry and the flurry
Overcome by care!

Over yonder, over yonder —
Is it all worth while, I ponder,
As I 'm sitting here
In the midst of fruitful labors,
With the love of all my neighbors
Filling me with cheer?

Over yonder, over yonder —
Is it best to go? I wonder!
Golden is its lure,
But with all its dangers lurking
Would I not be rather working
Where Love is secure?

NOW

I 'm not botherin' my head
On the troubles that have sped
Or may come.
On the joys of Yesterday,
Or upon To-morrow's way,
I am dumb.

Yesterdays or days to be
They are all the same to me,
Anyhow.
I shall hold my vision true
On the things that I can do
JUST
RIGHT
NOW!

ON A RAINY DAY

What though the rain doth keep me in
And spoils to-day past any doubt?
A harvest rich it helps to win
And brings the laughing roses out.

So let it fall. The passing showers
May serve to make a present care,
But in its train the thirsting flowers
Will sweeter make the morning air.

THE WISER COURSE

No word of wrath shall come from me
When things go wrong upon my beat.
I 'll hold my tongue from growling free
And do my kicking with my feet!

THE WISE BIRD

"Chirrup! Chirrup!" The small bird sang his song
The while I brooded on some fancied wrong,
And straightway from the depths I turned and steered up,
And as his lyric bade me do, I cheered up.

The Sage is wise, and yet I never heard
More wisdom than I got from that small bird!

May 19

GARDENING

Have you got a garden where you gather wealth
Of the kind that comes from an abundant health?
There are other gardens full of human plants
Waiting for the worker looking for a chance!

Do you weed your garden, freeing it of woe
That the tender blossoms may more freely grow?
There are human blossoms choking mid the weeds
Of the stress of sorrow, and their daily needs!

In the human garden — that 's the place to work!
That 's the place where dangers to the flowers lurk!
In the city byways, in the slums of dole,
Where there might be sprouting roses of the soul!

GREETING

What you are or where you be
Does n't matter much to me.
If your heart is heavy o'er
Some distress you can't ignore,
Here 's my hand, and all my heart,
Ready now to do their part
In fraternal sympathy —
Does n't matter what you be!

EVER FRIENDLY

When comes some dull and dreary morn
When you 're deserted and forlorn,
By strangers all begirt, alone,
With not a friend to call your own,
Seek out some breezy garden-close
Where bloom the lily and the rose.
Their friendly nod, so frank and free,
Will ease your lack of company.

OUT OF BONDAGE

He rises most who rises from his bond.
He bravest is who knoweth not despond.
To break the shackles of a pressing care
Calls for a strength and for a courage rare,
And life the sweeter is for all its pains
To him who 's nobly risen from his chains.

THE SOLAR SYSTEM

'T was well arranged that on spring days
The sun should very early rise
On all the Maytime sweets to gaze,
And on her glories feast his eyes;
The while when things are bleak with snows,
As in the winter is their fate,
He stays in bed and warms his toes
Until an hour somewhat late.

I guess I 'll make his system mine,
And sort of doze in face of Care,
But when there 's Joy upon the line
I 'll early rise and take my share.

COMPARATIVE DIET

If Robin Redbreast knows such bliss
On such a diet as is his,
How much more blissful is our lot
Upon the bill-of-fare we 've got!
If he can sing his tooral-ay
Upon the worms that come his way,
I sort of think one strawberry
Should get an anthem out of me.

TEARS

Now what are tears but showers sent
To ease the heart by sorrows pent?
And what are showers but the play
That leads us to the greener day?
To know them not, would be, I fear,
To dull the sweetness of our cheer,
And hold us all unknowing of
The deeper, hidden joys of Love.

THE SONG OF THE BROOK

Ah, the little brooklet! Merrily it sings
As its way it windeth on to mightier things;
Over crag and bowlder; through the darkened flume;
Never stops to murmur thoughts of care and gloom.

I will heed the lesson as my path I ply,
Past the Crags of Sorrow, 'neath a darkened sky,
And with song eternal hold the Faith it brings
That I too am moving on to mightier things!

THE HEART OF A BOY

I give you my word I am fifty to-day,
And many 's the trouble that 's lurked on my way.
Misfortune and failure have each done their part,
And bitter the tears that have welled in my heart.
But faith in my God, and the love of my kind,
And smiles, whether wistful or not, in my mind,
Have held me at fifty as full of true joy
As ever you 'll find in the Heart of a Boy!

RENEWAL

When overburdened with the cares
 That all your peace of mind destroy,
Give up your shop and all its wares
 And play that you 're once more a boy.
Go out into some grassy track,
 Forget the barter and the dollar,
And lying flat upon your back
 Just whistle, sing, or yell, or holler.

There 's nothing helps us more in ruth
Than such renewals of our youth.

COMPENSATION

When folks pass by and kind o' sniff and sneer
Becuz I hain't got inter high Society,
It sort o' fills my sperrits up with cheer,
When noticin' the starchy duds they weer,
An' all their other hifalutin' gear,
To think Society hain't yit got inter me!

MEMORIAL DAY

Is there war within your heart
With its lashing sting and smart,
 Leaving you undone?
Think of them that bore their part
 Back in Sixty-one!
Do your drooping shoulders bear
Crosses of such black despair?
Does your Spirit bend below
Such a weight of weary woe
As befell that mighty host
In the din of battle lost?

For the Blue, and for the Gray,
Wreathe your laurels on this day,
Thanking God your present cares
Hold no sorrows such as theirs!

WHY NOT?

Considerin' the loveliness that round about us lies,
Why not dwell on the roses 'stead o' cussin' out the flies?

RICHES

Now Crœsus, he hath bonds and stocks
Securely locked up in his box;
And Dives hath no end of lands
On which his marble palace stands;
And Midas hath a magic touch
That turns to gold all he can clutch.

But when it comes to sun and moon,
And all the joys of dawning June;
The songs of birds in yonder tree,
The merry sparkle of the sea;
And true love always standing by —
Who calls them wealthier than I?

June 2

THE PROOF

Do you doubt that you shall be
Blest with Immortality?

Glance about you at the bowers
Filled afresh with reborn flowers!

Heed the leaves that reappear
From the death of yesteryear!

Watch the grasses in the mirth
Of a glorious rebirth!

Think you that in God's great plan
New birth is denied to Man?

Man alone — is he to be
Shorn of Immortality?

'Mid these tokens full of cheer
Does n't seem much room for fear!

June 3

JUST A HINT

When Trouble comes a-howlin', and a-knockin' on your door,
Just worry all ye need ter, not a single atom more!

CONSERVATION

I never give others a piece o' my mind,
Because as I live on I not only find
That scolding don't pay,
But day after day,
Amid all the chaff and the wheat I have sown,
I need all my mind to fight faults of my own.

IN SORRY PLIGHT

To owe nobody anything? Well, that is not
for me!
'T would take away, I rather fear, quite
half the joy of life.
I like to think of all the debts in loving
sympathy
I owe to those whose tenderness has eased
me of my strife.

It brings a glow into my heart to think of all
I owe
To sturdy friends, who, when amid the
cares of life I grope,
Refresh me with their precious stores of love
to kill my woe,
And for the sting of sorrow substitute the
sweets of hope.

He is indeed in friendless plight who hath no
creditor
And does not know the joyous task of paying
off the score!

THE VACANT CHAIR

Have you a vacant chair
Somewhere?
Let it be filled by Memory
With visions fair
Of scenes that used to be.
Within its soft embrace
Once more retrace
The well-beloved form of one
To other realms passed on.
Live o'er again the happy hours
That strew your yesterdays like flowers
Along a sunlit way
That neither wither nor decay,
And bless that vacant chair
For standing there!

THE PEACE LOVER

When there be seeds o' trouble 'round,
And all the soil is fertile,
I never make the slightest sound,
But shut up like a turtle.

I never cared for craps o' weeds,
Ner fancied much the thistle,
And when it comes to warlike deeds
I think I 'd ruther whistle.

June 8

THE JOY OF DISCOVERY

I 'm glad that I don't know it all,
Whichever way I turn.
I greatly fear that life would pall
With nothing more to learn.

It brightens much the dreary way
To wonder what will be
The brand new thing each brand new day
In passing teaches me.

June 9

SOME COMFORT

Folks complain I hain't done nothin', and
perhaps they 're right, by Gum!
But I 've never done nobody, and I guess
that 's goin' some!

June 10

AN OBSERVATION BY THE WAY

I 've noticed as I 've passed along
Amid life's rush and flurry,
That anger never righted wrong,
And care grows fat on worry.

THREE WISHES

If some good fairy came to me
And said she 'd grant me wishes three,
I 'd make the first " a heart a-thrill
With pity for my neighbor's ill ";
The second, " strength to do my part
To bring peace to his troubled heart ";
And third that " I should have the mind
To be of service to my kind."

I would not ask for love or gold,
Or laurels woven for the bold,
For in that sort of human pelf
I 'd rather win them for myself.

DOWN BRAKES!

Now don't go pushing Time too fast!
 Why should you wish your days to hum?
You 'll find youth all too soon has passed,
 And hoary-headed age hath come.

Let days run slow as e'er they please,
 And thank your stars they linger on.
Who lives too quickly seldom sees
 Their sweetness till, alas, they 're gone!

FISHING

All the world 's a fishin' pool,
And within its waters cool
 Lie all sorts of fishes.
We can catch most any kind
That is suited to our mind
 'Cordin' to our wishes.

We can land a mess o' woe
Any time we wish to go
 After trouble anglin'.
We can land no end of care
In the waters everywhere
 On the hooks of wranglin'.

We can fill our basket up
Like an overflowin' cup
 With a mess beguilin',
If we bait our fishin'-hooks
With good cheer, and pleasant looks,
 Sympathy and smilin'.

WRINKLES AND WRINKLES

There 's wrinkles, and wrinkles, and still other wrinkles,
Some coming from frowns and some coming from twinkles;
Let mine be the kind when old age cometh by
That show a warm heart through the depths of the eye!

COMING

I 've never seed a mornin' yit
When I expected nothin'
Thet if I 'd jest git up an' git
Has failed to bring me suthin'.
Does n't really matter who yer
Are, there 's suthin' comin' to yer!

THE JOY OF GIVING

Who 's never known the joy of giving
Has never known the bliss of living.
It matters not the style of gift;
A bit of gold to ease some shift,
Or just a smile, a sunny rift
Of sympathy, some care to lift
From shoulders worn and bending;
Some little act befriending;
A gentle whack
Upon the back
To hearten up some troubled wight
Whose steps have wandered from the light;
These all are gifts well worth the giving
For those who seek the joy of living.
Just go some day
Upon the quiet
Out on the way
My friend, and try it!

A SOVEREIGN REMEDY

When, tossing on my couch at night,
Old Worry comes my rest to ruin,
I stare at him with all my might
And tell him that " There 's nothin' doin'."

" I 'm very busy now," I say.
" To put you off fills me with sorrow;
But you must come some other day —
Say ten o'clock, perhaps, to-morrow? "

I find that by this style of chaffing
It is n't long before I 'm laughing,
And when he sees my smiling lips
Why then, of course, old Worry skips.

A PHILOSOPHIC VIEW

I have n't a horse or a motor-car,
Nor even an old-time bike,
But I 've got two legs that carry me far
Whenever I wish to hike;
And I 've noticed this, as my way I peg
On over my destined course:
There 's never a man who would swap one leg
For motor, or bike, or horse!

ON THINKING GLADNESS

Who thinks December all the day
Will find life's road a cheerless way;
But he whose mind is pinned to June
Will traverse meadows lit by noon.

If so you doubt this little rhyme,
Try thinking roses for a time!

A THREAT

I 'm going to seek my foe to-day,
And when I meet him on the way,
No matter who is with him there,
With head held high up in the air,
I 'll take the glove from off my fist
To give free play unto my wrist,
And then, as face to face we stand,
I 'll — offer him my outstretched hand!

AS TO TEMPER

To lose their temper now and then
Can do small hurt to angry men,
Provided 't is not found again.
Lost temper 's worth quite all it cost
If it will stay forever lost.

THE GLAD SILENCE

I met an enemy fierce to-day,
And he cussed me out till my hair turned
gray;
But my heart is light
As I think to-night
Of the things I thought and did n't say!

AN OBSERVATION

I 've noticed in getting along on the track,
In seeking life's laurels and premiums high,
A man can do more with a slap on the back
Than ever he does with a punch on the eye.

It makes little matter the style of the cribs
You set out to crack in the face of your foes;
More prizes will come from a dig in the ribs
Than ever were won by a whack on the nose.

In public, in private, whatever your field,
Wherever you labor, in hamlets or towns,
A far richer profit life's harvests will yield
To mortals whose smilings outnumber their frowns.

June 24

NEVER MIND!

When troubles blare
I always find
It pays to care,
And not to mind.

A TREASURY

There is a spot within my heart
That I have set with care apart,
Wherein each day it pleases me
To store some pleasant memory.

And hence it is, when days are gray,
I go as lightly on my way
As though I had a private sun
To draw upon!

June 26

WORKING IT OUT

Got a grouch on somebody?
 Go out in the wood.
Pick out some old sturdy tree,
 Give it to him good.

Speechify the things you 'd say
 If the chap was there.
Pile it on in fiery way
 Fit to scorch his hair.

Roar and ramp, and tear around;
 Go it good and hot.
Fill the air with wrath and sound,
 Sending him to pot.

Then when later he comes by
Meet him with a twinkling eye,
And with cheery greeting say,
 " Howdy do, to-day? "

THE SUN'S GIFT

A freckle? Yes! That 's where the warm
sun kissed me —
I 'd not have liked it if the orb had missed
me.
On beauty powders go and spend your
shekels;
For me I 'll take the sunshine and the
freckles.

FELLOWSHIP

I have n't much money to help out your
care —
I need all I 've got, and there 's little to
spare;
But if 't will help out when your troubles
look black
Just count upon me for a slap on the back!

June 29

THE ACCOUNTING

May I be like a sturdy tree
That steadfast stands, whate'er may be;
Aspiring to the starry heights,
With ne'er a thought of days or nights,
Save as they bring me growth and mind
To be of service to my kind.

And at the last, if so I fall,
And reach the hour that comes to all,
When the accounting must be made
Of all my deeds, may it be said
None ever needed to be hid,
And what I could do, that I did!

June 30

IN CLOVER

Are you down in the dumps like a deaf and a dumb one?
Then go out on the way and do something for some one —
It don't matter for whom — you will feel when it 's over,
Like the bumblebee feels, when he 's out in the clover!

July 1

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

If there 's trouble comin' to yer,
Let me wish yer Happy New Ye'r.
There 's no reason really why
You can't start one in July.
As for me, I go my way
Startin' new years every day.

KINDLY RHYME

Rhyme bids us in our troubles
To think of them as " bubbles ";
And when we meet despair
To pause right there and " share " —
And that 's why I 'm
In love with rhyme!

NO TIME

I have n't the time for the deeds of love
I really would like to do.
I have n't the days for the treasure-trove
Of ambitions high and true.

I have n't the years for the service great
I dreamed in the days of youth;
And so I have n't the time to hate
When the goal I seek is truth.

A DECLARATION

To-day they say
Is Independence Day,
And I for one am going to celebrate
With declarations of my free estate
From tyrannies I hate:
I 'm going to throw off evil passion's yoke,
And join the ranks of those untrammeled folk
Who 've freed themselves from fear and useless care,
From slavish selfishness; and loosed the snare
Of captiousness, suspicion, cynic sneers;
Of pessimistic jibes and scornful jeers.
A Freeman henceforth I,
Beneath a smiling sky
That sings of love, and hope, and confidence
In all men's good intent and God's beneficence!

TOO GOOD TO LEAVE

When you 've grown weary of this life,
And would escape its dreary strife,
Just pause and think of how you 'd run
If some one chased you with a gun!

At worst you 'll find it still so good
You would not leave it if you could.

THIS FUNNY WORLD

"It 's funny," said I, as I growled away,
"How all seems possessed to go wrong to-day."
"If that is the case," said my Better Half,
"And it 's really funny, why don't you laugh?"

And I — I laughed at her little conceit,
And a lemony world straightway turned sweet.

July 7

WHAT'S THE USE?

Now what 's the use o' worryin' becuz ye cannot see
Your way to bein' suthin' thet ye was n't meant to be?
The clam can't be a billionaire, a saddle-horse, or ram;
He cannot be a marmalade, an omelette, or a ham;
He cannot be a candidate, a rose, or pillow-sham,
But don't ye see thet he can be a derned fine clam?

IDLENESS AND LEISURE

A goodly part of man's distress
Arises from sheer idleness;
While victory, in fairish measure,
Comes from a proper use of leisure.

'T would helpful be if all men knew
The difference between the two.

A CONTRAST

When you feel you 're out, and you fear
you 're down,
And your outlook 's dark, and your friends
all frown,
Just turn your gaze
On the child who plays
On a sun-baked fire-escape in town!

I miss my guess when you see that tot
If your woes don't seem but a trifling lot!

FORBEARANCE

His voice was sharp, his notes were flat,
But just the same, for all of that,
He 'd song within, and there 's no doubt
That though 't was harshly gotten out,
And most unpleasant to the ear,
His main intent was simple cheer.
Hence I decided to forgive
And let the poor old fellow live.
No use to judge a mortal's heart
By his unhappy lack of art!

THE EVER-NEW

It may be there 's nothing new under the sun.
It may be the great deeds are all of them done.
But nevertheless there is plenty to do
In making the old things all over anew —
To bring a new strength to the arm of the weak;
To bring a new warmth to the heart that is bleak;
To bring a new outlook to those in despair;
To bring a new joy to the spirit in care;
To bring a new dawn to those shrouded in night;
To bring a new faith to souls lost to the light —
Were deeds quite as great as the deeds that were done
When something lay new in the path of the sun,
And, old tho' they be, are as fair to achieve
As ever the love Adam offered to Eve!

LEND A HAND

If you cannot lend a dollar to some chap who
cannot pay,
If you cannot place a quarter or a dime at his
command,
You can help him meet his troubles in a very
simple way:
Lend a hand! Lend a hand!
If he 's trembling on the verges of some
moral precipice,
Or is facing some temptation you are sure he
can't withstand,
There 's a loan perhaps will save him from
his ruin, and it 's this:
Lend a hand! Lend a hand!
Or perhaps he 's gone the limit, and is hope-
less in his dole —
Down and out, a moral wreck amid the drift-
wood of the strand —
It is then his need is greatest — for the com-
fort of his soul,
Lend a hand! Lend a hand!

July 13

A LITTLE CHAT

Said I to Myself: "I can't believe
The thing I can't understand!"
"Hold on," said Myself, "and by your leave
Let 's take this matter in hand:
Do you understand how the sun became
A daily torch full of luminous flame
To lead the old world from the depths of night
Out into a glorious realm of light?
Do you understand whence the stars were borne?
From out of what void the world was torn,
Or whither it goes on its whirling race
Through the uttermost lengths of an endless space?
Do you comprehend in the smallest part
The fathomless depths of a woman's heart —"
"Hold on!" cried I to Myself. "Hold on!
My faith 's returned, and my doubt is gone!"

THE CERTAINTY

Sometimes I cannot see
How ills are good for me,
And 't is my groaning plaint
Most often that they ain't.
But, all the same, no chill,
No bit of Fortune's ill,
In all this world of flurryin'
Was ever cured by worryin';
And when thro' dark we 're gropin'
More light will come from hopin'
Than ever came from mopin'!

JUST FOR TO-DAY

I 'm going to give up sneerin';
I' m going to give up jeerin';
I 'm going to give up sniffin',
And let all " Ifs " go whiffin',
Just for to-day.
I 'm going to give up " tutting,"
Let all my " Buts " go butting,
And try a course o' smilin'
To see what things beguilin'
Come o'er my way.

OUT OF THE DARK

I 've seen a field by sunshine so oppressed
That all therein seemed withered and distressed,
And then a big black storm-cloud coming by
Obscuring all the beauty of the sky
Has left in passing on that selfsame scene
A vision freshly lovely and serene!

No morals come from Nature — so they say —
But as for me, I find them every day!

LONELINESS

Alone? Well, even solitude is good
If it be rightly used and understood.
A man I know had never known himself
Until at last he lay upon the shelf,
And from that moment turned his talents loose,
And saw his way to make himself of use.

THE TREE

I rather like a tree
For company.
It gives me all it has to give:
The comfort of its shade, and helps me live
Contented with my lot
In just that spot
Where circumstance decrees that I remain;
And makes it plain
That growth does not depend on change of scene,
But on a temper, sturdy and serene,
To make the best of things that lie
Nearby;
My goal not fixed, but ever upward to
The glorious and everlasting blue.

July 19

THE LITTLE SONG

When trouble came and skies were drear,
Although his soul was filled with fear,
His heart within would softly croon
A sort of cheerful little tune:
Tara-diddle, tara-diddle, tara-diddle-deee.

No matter what the trouble there
It helped him over his despair —
That little song within his heart,
Devoid though it might be of art:
Tara-diddle, tara-diddle, tara-diddle-deee.

"No man," quoth he, "can really mope
And find himself bereft of hope,
If only as he walks along
He 'll hum that simple little song:
Tara-diddle, tara-diddle, tara-diddle-deee."

So all together! Let it ring!
Join in the chorus, all, and sing.
Start with a will each new-born day
With this, his care-dispelling lay:
Tara-diddle, tara-diddle, tara-diddle-deee.

SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE

Sometime when you 're thinkin' that nobody loves yer,
And life 's kind o' chilly, and every one shoves yer,
Jest take for your comfort this hint I send to yer:
There 's Somebody somewhere as would if they knew yer!

WEALTH

I dreamed last night that I had stores of
gold untold,
And toward my fellow-men turned mien so
cold
They fled away, and left me to myself
In a forlorn enjoyment of my pelf;
And 'stead of joy amid that golden dower
I found the prospect drab, and chill, and
sour.
I came to hate the dross, and when the dawn
Awoke me, I rejoiced to find it gone,
And in its place the truest kind of wealth:
The love of all my neighbors and good
health.

THE HURDY-GURDY MAN

The Hurdy-Gurdy Man some folks despise,
But as for me, when darkened are my skies
Much more than once some tuneful little air
From out his barrel-organ 's eased my care;
And I 've rejoiced that he hath come along
To soothe a grinding woe with grinding song.

PROBLEMS

Which came the first, the chicken or the egg?
That is a question I shall always beg.
I never vex my mind with points like that,
But like a man of appetite stand pat.
Come as they may, Egad, I 'm nothing loth
To sit me straightway down and eat 'em both.

We 'd all, I think, be happier than kings
Were we to worry not o'er unimportant things!

EACH TO ITS OWN

Because I cannot fly
No angry grouch have I;
 To birds I 'll leave the air;
And joy that on the street
Two fairly nimble feet
 Will take me anywhere.

You 'll never see me weep
Because I cannot sweep
 The depths as fishes free.
To them I 'll leave the seas
And all that in them is;
 The water 's not for me!

But here upon the land,
With sweets on every hand,
 Contented with my lot,
I 'll take what comes my way
And thank God every day
 For troubles I have not.

July 25

AS TO OWNING THE EARTH

Sometimes I 'd like to own the earth,
And then the notion strikes my bonnet
'T would cost far more than it were worth
To have to pay the taxes on it.
And on the whole I deem it best
Instead of toiling hard to win it,
To play I 'm just a welcome guest
Enjoying all the good that 's in it.

A HINT TO TIME-KILLERS

I 'm sorry for the feller with a pocket full o' pelf
Whose sole idee o' killin' time is killin' of hisself.
Some on us has so little time I sort o' wish the cuss
Who 's killin' it would let it live, and send it on to us.

THE GOLDEN MOMENTS

The dawn flings down a store of gold
As wealth for him to have and hold
Who makes each moment on its way
Serve some need of the passing day.
A day 's not long, but when it 's reckoned
Not by the hour, but by the second,
It makes a mighty goodly store
For getting things worth working for.
In thousands, eighty-six are there,
With just four hundred more to spare!

NO EXCEPTION

The flowers fade and pass away
And then return another day,
And fade, and pass, and as before
Come back to life and joy once more;
In all of which I seem to see
The proof of Immortality.
It cannot be in Nature's school
Man 's an exception to the rule.

FAITH AND THE FUTURE

The thing that always puzzles me
Is how this old world came to be,
And yet it helps me hold a good
Full faith in things not understood.

As for the future, there 's no knowing,
But all the same I 'm glad I 'm going;
And when the waves to come I 'm breasting
I 'm sure I 'll find it interesting.

July 30

SAVING TIME

Hain't got half the time we need,
Friend o' mine, fer bein' glad,
So I sort o' guess that we 'd
Better quit a-gettin' mad,
And bein' sad.
Don't ye think we better had?

A VACATION THOUGHT

Of all the hard tasks I 've ever done
The hardest I ever knew
Is lookin' around to find the fun
In nothin' at all to do.

AUGUST

Now comes a span of rare delights
In gracious, star-eyed, summer nights,
And tropic days that lure us far
From where the busy markets are,
And bid us joy in earth and sky,
With all the gifts of Nature nigh:
The woodlands peaceful, leafy lanes,
The meadows lush with ripening grains;
The music of the laughing rills,
The noble beauty of the hills;
The heavens blue, the silky air,
And rest apart from scenes of care.

A CURE

Can't smile, my friend, because you 're blue?
Well, here 's a little hint for you:
Look on the heavens for awhile;
The bluer they, the more they smile!
When trouble overtakes you, why
Pretend you 're just a bit of sky,
And do
As it does when it 's blue;
Look down on trouble and despair
As calm as though they were not there!

MY SERVITORS

When so the sun shines on my way
And warms my path through all the day,
Or when some tree with grateful shade
Its service at my feet hath laid;
Or when some river bears me on
Into some harbor, and anon
The moon and stars come forth at night
To furnish me with needed light,
And as in dreams at rest I lie
Some zephyr sings its lullaby —
What just complaint can mine e'er be
With such attendants serving me?

CONTRASTS

Beside my rose a thistle grew.
Into my joys there entered rue.
The rose seemed sweeter, and more fair,
Contrasted with the thistle there,
And strange to say, my joys likewise
Seemed deeper, seen through tearful eyes.

PRIDE IN HUMILITY

I 'm but a cog in life's vast wheel
That daily makes the same old trip.
Yet what a joy it is to feel
That but for me the wheel might slip!

'T is something after all to jog
Along and be a first-class cog!

SINGING SWEET

The birds are singing in the wood
Because they feel that life is good,
And not a hint of care or wrong
Disturbs the sweetness of their song,
Though cares and wrongs they doubtless find,
Each one according to his kind.

For me, as on my way I plod
Through wooded paths that must be trod
With distant prizes to be won
Beyond the glow of setting sun,
Despite the vast perplexities
That everywhere one looks one sees,
'Spite heavy heart, and leaden feet,
May I too keep my singing sweet!

THE FRIEND UNCHANGEABLE

Long years ago when I was but a lad,
Once hurt and suffering, in spirit sad,
I chose for friend a star up in the blue
And in its kindly smile forgot my rue.
The years have passed and friends have come
and gone.

I 've tasted joy, and passed through seasons
wan.
Things counted on have failed me, and in
tears
I 've tried to drown my sorrows and my
fears.

But all the while, in happiness or pain;
In moments of success, or efforts vain,
That kindly star, unchangeable as truth,
Has stood my friend, as in the days of youth.

LILIES

A lily in a window stood
And looked out on the multitude.

A child upon the pavement raised
Upon the lily's beauty gazed.

I looked upon them both and thought
Of pure souls in such currents caught,

And straightway set about to save
The twain from perils of the pave.

And now I find a store of cheer
From out that deed of yesteryear:

The child, a sturdy human he!
The flower a precious memory!

ON A WARM DAY

Yes, it 's pretty hot to-day,
And my strength is waning.
I don't like it, I must say,
But I 'm not complaining.

For you see a wish I made
When the snows were flying
Now, though overlong delayed,
Nature 's gratifying.

Wished warm weather 'd come along
Back in February.
Now I 've got it, good and strong —
How our wishes vary!

August 10

THE GREATEST JOYS

Amid our sunny hours
In quiet, fragrant bowers,
 Where roses bloom,
And happy birds are singing
Their measures sweetly ringing,
 Dispelling gloom,

Let 's not forget those others —
The Children of our Brothers
 In cities gray,
Where trouble, toil, and sorrow,
Are found to-day, to-morrow,
 As yesterday.

The greatest joys of living
Are found in freely giving,
 And paying heed
Out of our present treasure
In full and lavish measure
 To them in need.

SAVORLESS

My diet 's largely bread and cheese,
And water is the wine I quaff;
My notion of a life of ease
Is now and then to sit and laugh.

Yet have I seen men highly crowned,
Men fêted, courted, sought by kings,
Who, 'spite of laurels so renowned,
Could not enjoy these simple things.

Fame 's very sweet, and all of that,
And with it doubtless comes delight;
But after all life 's rather flat,
If one has lost one's appetite!

REJUVENATION

To rise at dawn with no one else about;
To tip-toe slyly off, all bare of shoes;
To make the wood re-echo with my shout;
To wade the meadows lush with dripping dews;
To plunge head first into some limpid pool;
To lie upon some bank and scan the skies,
Rejoicing in the early breezes cool,
Forgetting all but what around me lies —
In short, to leave behind the stress and care
Of worldly complications with their pain,
And spurred to song by drafts of morning air
Just for a time become a boy again!

Ah, what a plan in seasons of distress
To ease the soul of all its weariness,
And send it back into the busy mart
Renewed in living strength to do its part.

THE CHOICE

I have seen a palace wall
 Hung with objects rich and rare,
Beauty lavished over all;
Yet about it lay a pall
 Just because love was not there.

I have seen a sordid pile
 Made of ugly bricks that still,
As I gazed on it the while,
Seemed to be a living smile;
 Love sat by the window-sill.

Proud estates in vast array,
 These indeed none would refuse,
But when Fortune comes my way
Offering her treasures gay,
 Love 's the first that I shall choose.

AUGUST HEAT

The heat of old August some mortals despise,
And look on it coldly with hate in their eyes;
But not so with me, 't is a thing I defend
As like the warm glow in the heart of a friend.

IN RESERVE

Take the overfervidness of the summer day,
Store it up within your breast, neatly packed
away.
Maybe in some coming hour, now all unfore-
seen,
It will serve to turn a gray, wintry prospect
green,
Or if not, just let it rest, of yourself a part —
No man ever yet hath had too much warmth
of heart.

August 16

MY FRIEND

When from the skies the rain torrential drops,
My friend remarks: " Fine weather for the crops! "

When from the East a chill wind loudly roars,
He smiles and says: " Fine day to stay indoors! "

When from the sun the heat streams fervently,
Says he: " Just right to sit beneath a tree! "

And when skies hesitate 'twixt rain and shine
He sits, and smiles, and softly murmurs: " Fine! "

In short, whate'er the weather's style or whim
Each day that comes is somehow " Fine " to him,

With the result no matter what may hap
By day or night he is a sunny chap!

AS TO BIRTH

One pleasant thing I find upon this earth;
We common folk may lack a noble birth,
As lofty Ghibelline, or royal Guelph,
But man's real berth depends upon himself,
And once 't is won, more permanent 't will be
Than windfalls dropped from some ancestral
tree.

August 18

IN STORMY WEATHER

There 's wind ahead, and rocks about,
And rough 's the sailing on the sea,
But all the same amid the rout
'T is joy to test the heart of me.
There 's something in the tempest's blast,
And in the current's knavish guile,
Beneath the skies all overcast,
That makes the sailing worth the while!

NOTHINGNESS

A world without a future life? I can't conceive the thought!
Each human soul the merest clod of clayish substance wrought,
With nothing to aspire to, with nothing here to gain,
With nothing rising higher than our pleasure and our pain?
Just coming out of Nowhere for a little while and then
To turn and go to Nowhere and sheer Nothingness again?
There 's nothing in the notion, and your argument, my friend,
Refutes itself by leading unto nothing in the end!

A CHEERFUL SOUL

I know a mighty cheerful wight
Who, though he stands in his own light,
By o'er-hot days is ne'er dismayed
Because he sits in his own shade!

LOVE'S MINTAGE

Who pays his debts in love and gratitude
 Will find when he has settled every score,
Some Genius of affection hath renewed
 The treasure he hath paid from out his store.
Indeed, he finds who strives love's gold to win,
The more he pays it out the more comes in.

IN PARTNERSHIP

Out in the fresh, green wood
'T is good to lie,
Far from the multitude,
And scan the sky,
And think of all the things
These skies have seen
Since Time unfurled his wings,
And life hath been.

For, in despite your place
Is lowly, still
In life's achieving race
Your place you fill.
It somehow thrills the heart
To rest and dream,
And feel yourself a part
Of God's great scheme!

PERENNIAL

" There 's nothing new beneath the sun
To soothe your jaded appetite? "
Get out and get some good deed done,
You poor, deluded, weary wight.
No good deed yet hath failed to fill
The doer's spirit with a thrill
That 's just as fresh and full of joy,
As when Methuselah was a boy.

"OLD NEVER-MIND"

"I-Don't-Care" is not my kind.
I prefer old "Never-Mind."
He 's the chap all full of song
That in trouble helps along.

"I-Don't-Care" 's a reckless chap
Leading on to sure mishap,
But dear "Never-Mind," the gay,
Takes us smiling on our way;

And when Trouble ventures in,
Greets him with a sort of grin
Of the kind that makes him guess
He has got the wrong address.

August 25

RELEASE

By day I 'm held by chains
That fasten me to toil.
I have to work for gains,
To win my share of spoil.

But when the night hath come,
And daily tasks are done,
The chains so burdensome
Are lifted, one by one.

And over hill and dale
On dreamy jaunts I fly;
Right gallantly I sail
Beneath the moonlit sky.

And while my body worn
Rests here in slavery,
My soul, in dreams reborn,
Rejoices to be free!

MY WILL

My fortune? Well, it comes to nil,
But none the less I make my will:
The earth, the air, the sea, the sky,
And all the things that in them lie;
With love, and faith, and constancy,
And hope, and human sympathy,
And courtesy and kindliness,
And all the qualities that bless,
Wherever found, no matter where,
Upon said earth, or in said air,
Being of sound, disposing mind
I herewith leave to all mankind,
And hope they 'll use them just as free
As though they 'd all belonged to me.

NEVER FAILING

At times when on life's sea
 Far from my course I 've run,
With clouds of misery
 To hide away the sun,
A never-failing chart
 To lead me safely through
I 've found within my heart,
 With love the compass true.

THE ECONOMIST

Must admit that living 's high,
 Clothes are costly, so is rent.
Prices soaring to the sky,
Gold likewise inclined to fly,
But nobody can deny,
 Laughter does n't cost a cent!

Wherefore when expenses rise,
Laugh, and so economize.

RESIGNATION

Clouds were piling in the west;
Storm was come to be my guest;
Vexed my spirit not the least,
For I turned unto the east.

Clouds were filling all the east;
Thunderbolts their flash released,
Yet my spirit was at rest,
For I gazed into the west.

East or west, whate'er the storm
With its terrors multiform,
Undisturbed I shall remain
Till clear weather comes again.

GOOD MORNING

Whatever weather be a-borning
'T is etiquette to say " Good morning! "
And truly every morning 's bright
Compared, at least, unto the night;
So even though the day be wet,
Let 's smile and cling to etiquette —
" Good morning! "

August 31

TEACHERS

I 've placed my troubles all apart,
And studied them through tears of pain.
And now I find each one a chart
That tells me how with sturdy heart
To meet them when they come again.

SEPTEMBER HUES

Now comes September — over all
The tints of Summer and the Fall
In gay and gladsome patchwork fuse
To make a quilt of gorgeous hues,
The which before the eye is spread
To tell of joyous days ahead,
And bring all glowing to the mind
The lovely hours left behind.
The gold, the green, upon the trees
Reflect our hopes and memories:
The golden hopes of days to be
Mixed with the greens of memory!

September 2

AN APPOINTMENT

Worry comes and says to me:
"Guess I 'll stay and visit ye!"
And I turn and answer then:
"Guess ye 'll have to guess again,
Ain't no room for Worry here;
Come around some other year."
"When?" says he. Says I: "Wa-al, how
'Bout a hundred years from now?"

IRRIGATION

Hain't complainin' of the wet,
 Rain, or trouble — no, by Jings!
For ye see I can't forget
 Rain is good for growin' things;
And when trouble 's round me flowin'
I can feel my soul a-growin',
Growin' like the ripenin' grain,
All the better for the rain!

UNWORRIED

Like everybody else I would n't care
If somehow I became a billionaire.
A billion I am sure would e'er be found
A tidy little sum to have around.
And yet, I 'm satisfied without it, for
'T would really be a sum to worry o'er,
And while of course I never could refuse it,
Without it I 'm not bothered lest I lose it.

FORTUNE

Don't suppose I 'll e'er be great
Like the folks of vast estate.
Don't suppose I 'll e'er be rich
Like old Reddymun and sich.
But one thing is sure as day
As I walk along my way:
I can pile up stacks of cheer
Mined straight from the atmosphere
That will make their stores immense
Look like thirty-seven cents!



THE WELCOME GUEST

I 'm going to lead this life
 As though I were a guest
Upon this ball of strife,
 And do my level best
To order so each day
 That when my grip I pack
My fellow guests will say
 They hope I 'll soon be back!

NAME VS. FAME

Do not really care at all
For a lofty pedestal.
Would n't give a cent for fame;
But I 'd like to win a name
As a chap you 'd always find
With an open, four-square mind,
Who, whate'er the rout or revel,
Always stood " upon the level! "

THE ASHES OF SUCCESS

He travels fastest who travels alone!
Kipling.

Maybe 't is true that who travels alone
Travels the fastest, but what of the goal?
Who cares for speed when the end is a stone
Void of the deepest of joys of the soul?

Give me a comrade, a friend that will share
All of the sorrows and joys of the chase!
Give me a spirit to ease me in care —
Little care I how retarded the pace!

Prizes in solitude won, they are naught!
Loneliness holds all the letters of loss.
Give me sheer failure in comradeship wrought
Rather than isolate fame that is dross!

THE FRESH DEAL

Now here 's a pack of twenty-four new hours;
Each one a card with undeveloped powers
Placed freely in our reach.
Let 's play them all face upward on the table
And play the game, and see if we are able
To take a trick with each!

September 10

DUTY

Yes, Duty is a friend of mine —
On that it 's safe to bet!
But all the same, in rain or shine,
I 'm going to " do him " good and fine
At every chance I get!

THE CARESSING HAND

Glint of sun on shimmering tree,
Glow of stars on land and sea;
Light of day and glimmer of night —
What are these but proof in sight
Of the soft caress of a God of Love
Sent from the Father's hand above
Bringing to all His children here
Hints of joy, and hope, and cheer,
Of the final home that waits for all
Beyond the gates celestial?

THE REAL THING

It may be I am not the style
Of feller fellers think worth while,
But I 'm the feller that I be,
And that 's the style o' styles for me;
And what I am, that kind o' man
I 'm goin' to be the best I can,
And when I 've finished up the job
No one can say that I 'm a snob
For makin' out myself a saint
When everybody knows I ain't!
Whate'er I be in joy or rue,
I 'm goin' to be it through and through.

THE HOUSE IN ORDER

I admit I am not comely!
Fact is I am more than homely,
But behind my phiz so fey —
Well, it 's not for me to say
What you 'll find inside o' that
Lurkin' here beneath my hat,
But I 've tried to make the place
Somewhat better than my face:
Orderly, and clean, and neat,
Sunny, cheerful, fresh, and sweet.
Beauty 's sure worth having, but
Joy can dwell inside a hut,
And I 've found true happiness
Hid within the plainest dress.

September 14

AS TO CHAINS

Our chains are what we make 'em! That 's
a truth
I 've learned in passing on to age from youth:
A burden full of woe and misery
If wrought of service done reluctantly;
A golden gift of richest treasure-trove
If every link is forged in fires of love!

THE FIXTURE

Anchored fast! Can't get away!
Same old prospect every day.
Same old vistas, same old sights;
Same old days and same old nights.
Awful fate? Well, I don't know.
Some days maybe it seems so.
Other days I seem to be
Like a sort of green old tree,
Full of sap, and growing high,
Ever upward to the sky;
Joying in both sun and rain;
Taking pleasure, bearing pain,
As they come, days dark or glad —
Really, that is not so bad!

THE PEACEFUL SOUL

I won't fight with any one,
Does n't matter what he 's done.
Quarreling I never find
Suited to my style of mind.

Either I am wrong or right.
If I 'm wrong, why should I fight?
If I 'm right, pray tell me how
I 'd be more so for a row?

THE OLD-TIME JOKE

When my plans go wrong, and my schemes
go broke,
I try to remember some old-time joke
That made me laugh in the days gone by
Ere ever I knew what it was to sigh;
And I laugh, and laugh,
At the ancient chaff,
And deep of the cup of the past I quaff,
And ere I know from those youthful dreams
I gather new plans, and more hopeful
schemes!

AN EVEN BREAK

I never heard of Socrates,
Or old man Alcibiades,
 Or other learned Greeks.
There 's really nothing that I know
Of Epictetus, Cicero,
 Or similar antiques.

But really I don't care a hang
Because I never knew that gang
 Of chaps that used to be,
For when it comes right down to that
I 'll wager any man a hat,
 They never heard of me!

AS TO FOLLY

Are you feeling melancholy
O'er some little act of folly?
 Don't you mind a bit.
All the wisdom of the Sages
In the long chain of the ages
 Has been based on it.

Folly 's but the finger-post
When upon our way we 're lost,
 Groping all around,
Pointing with a jocund air
To the paths that lead us where
 Wisdom 's to be found!

September 20

AN EASY LOAN

We all know just how mighty fine 't would be
If we had one more hand to help us on
The work we have to do, and how we 'd see
Our pathway clear unto the glorious dawn
Could we command
That selfsame hand.
Wherefore, my friend, whene'er your eye espies
A toiler pressed for what his toil procures
In need of that third hand to win the prize,
Just pause upon your way — and lend him yours!

THE NEW LOVE AND THE OLD

A certain Sage I know takes satisfaction
In calling life a " chemical reaction,"
And love with all its joyous efflorescence
An " evanescent bit of effervescence."
If he 's sincere when he shall wed he 'd oughter
Choose for his bride a glass of soda water,
And be content for pleasures and for troubles
With simple drafts of frothy, sudsy bubbles;
And when he dies into a Heaven pass
That 's just a tank of supernatural gas!

But as for you and me, my friend, let us be ever found
Believers in the old-time love that makes the world go round!

THE GOOD WORD

A good word spoken in the morning
Is one the wise are never scorning.
However bright or drear the day
It cheers us ever on the way,
And if by chance we do not seek it,
Let it be ours at least to speak it.
Who knows but that 't will prove the seed
To ease some brother in his need,
And swerve him from some pathway, where
The end is ruin and despair?

THE CARGO

The cargo of my ship, my friend,
Is love and tenderness
For all men in distress.
Give me your order, and I 'll send
Your share by wireless.
As for the bill,
Just pay it in good-will,
Terms, C. O. D.
That 's good enough for me.

September 24

THE LEGIONS OF YOUTH

Let the young men come
With clatter and hum,
And hands for the job that 's to do!
Let 's never feel sad,
But rather be glad
For spirits so youthful and true.

New tasks for the world
Are daily unfurled
In seeking the ultimate truth.
New tasks to be done,
New goals to be won,
Demanding the powers of Youth.

So let us be glad
For the lass and the lad
Now passing us fast in the race,
And welcome with glee
The strengthful trustee
God sends to step into our place!

TO THE TOILER

When tasks are hard upon the upward slope
That is the time that calls for cheer and hope.
'T is when the summit 's reached and all
seems clear
'T were well to ope the heart to thoughts of
fear.

So courage take, as on the rocky road
You upward toil, nor bend beneath your load.
Fear not the dangers imminent and grim —
He 's far worse off who 's naught ahead of
him!

THE OPEN DOOR

I have no slightest fear that I shall find
My Heaven shut when I shall reach the goal,
For Heaven were no Heaven to my mind
If it were closed to any human soul.

'T is in its all-embracing openness
Its glory lies, with welcome glad within
Relieving with God's mercy the distress
Of them who bend beneath the weight of sin.

A FUTILE CREED

Look here, my friend, with all your song and
dance,
And all your " scientific " circumstance,
In which you try to prove the Universe,
And life within it merely luck, or worse,
The whole beginning and its ending pent
Within the hazard of some " accident,"
Just take the sun, the moon, the stars we see,
With all their clock-like regularity —
Can you believe that all this consonance
And certainty so real are based on chance?
I don't
And won't!
I could n't if I would,
And what is more, I would n't if I could!

September 28

SUCCESS

Met a man to-day
Who, most people say,
Is a great success,
Nothing more nor less;
But —
Ne'er a smile upon his face, pallid was his cheek,
And his wan lips quivered when he tried to speak;
Could n't laugh and could n't sing as he walked along;
Children made him nervous with their merry song;
Looked with dark suspicion on his fellow-men —
Thought they 'd come to rob him of his gold — and then
I says, says I,
As he passed by,
" If that 's success, why when I dine
Just mix some failure in with mine! "

THE RETORT COURTEOUS

If some one says that you 're not any good,
Or some such pleasant thing or other,
Just smile as though you had n't understood,
And call him " Brother ! "
That 's quite the same as calling him " another "
And saves a row,
And what 's the use of rowing, anyhow?

AS TO TALK

When things within the kittle
 Git bilin' pretty hot,
Talk slow, and mighty little,
 But make it say a lot.

You bet your bottom dollar
 The meanest grub in reach
Is when ye come to swaller
 Unnecessary speech!

October 1

CHILL OCTOBER

They do you ill who call you chill
October.
To me you thrill with sheer good-will.
Your raiment, far from sober,
Is bright and gay,
And cheers each day
With prospects full of gladness
That turn the mind
To thoughts of joyous kind,
And drive away all sadness,
For everywhere we look, we find
The harvests rich of labors done
Beneath the Summer's warming sun.

October 2

THE REVERSIBLE PROVERB

"Be good and you 'll be happy."
Yes, that 's well understood.
But don't forget, old Chappy,
That other proverb snappy:
Be happy and you 'll be good!

THE DIFFERENCE

The Pessimist is he who sees
In clouds naught but distress,
And in their opaque mysteries
Discerns mere inkiness.

The Optimist admits the cloud,
And yet his glance pursues
The misty rifts that are endowed
With iridescent hues.

MOVING ON

The body 's but a tenement
In which we dwell awhile,
On daily labors mostly bent,
Mixed with the tear and smile.

And when we move away we go
Some say to Nothingness,
But as for me, while I don't know
Precisely the address,

I 'm confident that I shall win,
If so my labor 's good,
A dwelling place secure within
Some finer neighborhood.

October 5

IN THE SERE AND YELLOW

Now here 's a withered leaf from off an oaken tree,
Escaped from out the sheaf of summer's greenery.
'T is old, and all the green hath faded from its gown,
And in the autumn keen its garb is sombre brown.

Yet when some sportive breeze inviteth it to dance,
How eager 't is to seize the gay and joyous chance!
How merrily it twirls and gaily pirouettes,
And ever onward whirls, forgetful of regrets!

Here 's hoping that in age, e'en as the sere leaves do,
Our feet may trip the stage in dancing measure too!

EPHEMERAL WOE!

What has become of the worries of Noah?
 What has become of the woes of Job?
What has become of the trials sore
 Hid underneath King Solomon's robe?

Where are the cares of Charles the First?
 Where the tears that Niobe shed?
Where are the troubles of parching thirst
 Tantalus bore in the ages dead?

Where are the griefs of the long dead
 years —
 Priam's, Ulysses', and Jonah's and all?
Lost in the streams of forgotten tears,
 Dead, gone, and buried beyond recall!

Gone, O ye Sufferer! Gone for aye,
Just as your troubles will fade away!
Peace is eternal, but trial and fear
Pass to the vales of the yesteryear!

A PLEASANT SIGHT

I 've seen full many a pleasant sight
That filled my spirit with delight:
Green hills, the broad sweep of the sea,
The flame of some autumnal tree
Like some great torch athwart the sky,
The love-light in a lover's eye.
But none more glad I ever knew
Than that which flashed across my view
When, sitting on the floor to-day
I saw two merry wights at play,
A grand-dad full of gleeful joy
A-playing marbles with his boy!

THE BEST OF BREWS

If you would quaff a brew of joy,
A mixture fine without alloy,
Pour milk of human sympathy
Into a cup of chari-tea,
And share it with that needy wight
Who happens first to heave in sight.
I miss my guess if it is not
The finest brew you ever got!

FRIENDS AND BROTHERS

Why folks complain of loneliness
Is strange to me, I must confess.
Why, every brook, and every tree,
And every twinkling star I see,
Hath something good to say to me!
If you would find a comradeship
That through the years will never slip,
Be friends with all the stars of night,
Greet all God's creatures with delight —
The breeze that blows, the bird that sings;
The seas with mystic murmurings.
The stranger on the highway too
Is brother unto me and you,
In that great family a part
Whose home lies in the human heart!

STRANGE LOGIC

Hev ter laff when fellers say:
" Ain't no Heaven, anyway."
Makes life seem a foolish joke
Endin' in a whiff o' smoke —
Like a-sailin' on the sea
'Thout a port ahead o' ye.
Hain't no logic in a claim
Heaven 's jest an empty name,
And fer all yer earthly stewin'
Nature's answer 's " Nothin' doin'! "

THE PEACEMAKER

For quarreling I can't deny
My liking 's rather slim,
And if somebody passing by
To pick a fight with me shall try,
I 'll simply thump him on the eye
Before I 'll fight with him —
And ere my blows shall cease
I 'll win him back to peace.

THE GREAT TO BE

Every drop in yonder river
 Flows into the mighty sea
With a message to deliver
 From the Hand of Mystery.
Think you that these drops of water,
 Thus become a mighty whole,
Hold a mission great, while naught a
 Hope remaineth for the soul?

I believe, and I affirm it
 As each drop is to the sea,
So the soul, whate'er you term it,
 Is unto the Great To Be!
To a mighty Whole Eternal
 Flows the human tide alway,
Ready for the tasks supernal
 In the bright celestial day.

DOUBTS

Rather like a good hard fight
On a point of doubt;
It is really such delight
Just to knock it out.
Doubts are helpful, seems to me,
When the truth you seek,
Pointing out with clarity
Where your faith is weak.

MY CHOICE

Yes, I 'd like brains, and wisdom truly great,
And vision keen to choose my path aright.
I 'd wish to be in questions of the State
A man to lead my fellows to the light.

In short, I 'd serve, and hope sagaciously
To meet each day's demands as they arise;
But better far than these pray grant to me
The heart to ease the woe that round me lies.

October 15

IN A HEAVY BLOW

Wind 's a-blowin' awful out —
Sort of hurricane, I guess —
Nothin' to feel bad about —
Ruther good thing, more or less,
Seein' wind, for all its blare,
Ain't no more 'n good fresh air!

ONLY A TEST

Cheer up, old Pal! Ain't ye doin' your best?
All of these troubles is only a test
Set for your strength for to settle for sure
How much or little your soul can endure.

Keep on a-smilin', and workin' away.
Prizes are sure for to come by some day,
Long as ye keep on a-doin' your best
Grinnin' and workin', whatever the test!

A PLEASANT TASK

About the nicest task I know
Is goin' out 'most any day
To find some feller full of woe
A-walkin' on his troubled way,
And if he 's full o' wrath an' bile
To make him smile.

Or if perchance tears dim his eyes,
Because of grief or some distress,
To help him from his sorrow rise
Unto the heights of happiness —
In other words, if he is sad
To make him glad.

There 's many a way to turn the trick
For human brothers in their need.
Some pile the humor on too thick,
And failure waits upon the deed.
The best and surest recipe
Is sympathy!

WHEN TEMPESTS RAGE

When tempests rage upon the way,
 And all the winds are wet and high,
Mind well those doctors wise who say
 'T is best to keep your tootsies dry.

But when the tempest in the soul
 Doth ramp, and roar, and harshly storm,
He best escapes the lash of dole
 Whose heart with love and cheer is warm.

October 19

THE FREE AGENT

If trials hard pursue you and your heart is steeped in woe,
Be thankful you 're not Jonah in the days of long ago.
If by misunderstandings you are wearied and distressed,
Rejoice you were not Moses by old Pharaoh oppressed.
If debt and dearth have snared you in the warp and woof of dread,
Be glad you were not Charles the First, who settled with his head.
And if you 're chained to some chill post of daily slavery,
Look skyward, and not post-ward, where your spirit may be free.
The limbs of man, his feet, his hands, may be enmeshed in dole,
But steel was never fashioned yet to chain the human soul.

October 20

THE NEWBORN DAY

If life seems dark, and dreary, and forlorn,
Just rise betimes and see the new day borne
Upon the wings of morn,
And from the pageant of that lovely hour
Gain courage fresh, a sense of new-born power
To grasp the gifts of Opportunity
The young day sets before you lavishly,
All free!
Thrust woe behind you, and let yesterday
Its own indebtedness in trouble pay,
And with the smiling sun keep pace and tread
The path unto the goal that lies ahead.

THE GOODLY THING

The sands are running through the glass.
The hours, days, and swift years pass,
And carry us along.
They bring us joys, they bring us tears;
They bring us hopes, they bring us fears;
They bring us grief and song.

A meed of pleasure and of pain.
Our share of sunshine and of rain,
Unsparingly they give;
And we, despite our plaint of woe,
Cling close to them, because we know
It has been good to live!

THE SPUR

Troubled, are you? Well, why not?
That is just your mortal lot.
If you had n't any care
You 'd have lost a goodly share
Of your portion of this life
Which is blent of peace and strife.

Peace alone would leave you soft,
Nerveless for the climb aloft,
While the wholesome flick of woe
Sets your pulses all aglow,
Makes you grit your teeth and vow
You will conquer anyhow!

THE DALES AND BROOKS

Waste not thine eyes alway on books,
But seek the Autumn dales and brooks,
And in their music and their glow
Find surcease from thy load of woe.
Or if perchance thy path shall lie
Where ne'er a brook runs gaily by,
Where dales are not, stand not apart,
But contemplate the throbbing heart
That pulses in the rivers free
Of hurrying humanity;
And seek the vales where suffering
Holds others 'neath its shadowy wing,
And there forget thine own despairs
In helping others carry theirs!

THE BETTER PORTION

Success I've loved, and failure I've not spurned.
From one gained wealth, and from the other learned.
Perhaps in this hath failure won the prize;
Who 's rich is merely rich, who 's learned is wise!

SOUL–FREE

Life's millstones hanging round my neck
May hold my body here in check,
But ne'er a millstone e'er shall be
To hold my soul in slavery!
Where it would soar it soars away,
Far back, perchance, to yesterday,
Or far ahead to some fair shore
The distant future holds in store;
Into the depths, unto the heights,
It speeds, and drinks deep of delights
That seem the greater for the pain
Of body in the throes of gain.
Let body moan its slavery,
And groan because it is not free,
But in my soul the songs I 'll sing
With which the Hills of Freedom ring.

A BAD INVESTMENT

"You cannot borrow cash on cheer!"
So saith the critic, with his jeer.
But say — see here —
If you should swap your cheer for cash,
You 'd very shortly come to smash.
The cash you 'd spend, and you 'd be found,
The day when payment-due came round,
The victim of an empty bubble
Who 'd merely swapped his cheer for trouble.
A bad investment, seems to me,
Unless you 're fond of misery.

CARE-PROOF

The really truly Me
Is not the thing you see,
But just an Am that hides
Way down in my insides;
And there it sits and dreams,
And formulates, and schemes,
And lets old trouble roar
Outside the care-proof door,
As mad as anythin'
Because he can't get in.

A SURE CURE

For a cure for coming wrinkles,
Here 's a recipe quite simple:
Turn your frownings into twinkles,
And each wrinkle to a dimple.
Try this method 'fore and after
Every meal, well-mixed with laughter;
Blithely, gaily,
Do it daily,
And the wrinkles you are fearing
Won't be long in disappearing.

AN AID TO TOIL

If there 's no music in my work
To help me on to overcome it,
I 'll get some tune myself, nor shirk
The pleasant task that 's mine to hum it.
It may not make a dull job breezier,
But I opine 't will make it easier
To hum that tune
From morn till noon,
And thence till eve
Shall come, my labors to relieve.

ALL HALLOWE'EN

Cometh Hallowe'en to-night
With its ghosts and mystic thrills.
Some are ghosts of past delight,
Some are spirits of past ills.
Let us joy in bygone sweets
That our memories retain,
And who ghosts of evil meets
Let him free his heart of pain —
They 're but spectres, gaunt and vain.

LIGHT UP!

The Jack-o'-Lantern that I sing
Is but a "punkin-headed" thing,
Yet with what joy it seems to grin
When it doth hold a light within!
What genial thoughts it doth inspire
When glowing with that inward fire!

So let it be with you and me
When things go "punkin-headed"! See —
As on your way you blindly grope
How all 's transformed when lit with hope!
And hope, that blessing past compare,
Is just as cheap as God's free air!

November 1

NOVEMBER GIFTS

November days with crispy air,
 And nipping mornings come apace,
And smiling Nature everywhere
 Presents a kindly sort of face.

Frost-diamonds cluster round her brows,
 A scintillating coronet;
And from her over-brimming mows
 She pays the harvester his debt.

The garnered grain she heaps up high,
 Reward for him who 's used her well,
And Fortune's gifts right lavishly
 She scatters over hill and dell.

Her treasury she opens wide,
 And bids us share the gleaming wealth
That lies in view on every side
 In corn, and coin, and rugged health.

HUGGING TROUBLE

This nursing of trouble and hugging of woe
Is quite the most futile of things that I know.
If you 'd be a nurse or a hugger, I pray
Go forth from your corner, and out on the way,
And there find a chance for some deed to be did
In hugging and nursing some motherless kid.

UNDAUNTED

Once out upon a lonely way
Upon a cold and wintry day
I saw a small bird tempest-tost,
And sore beset by chilling frost,
Now hither blown, now hurried there,
By rushing currents of the air,
A picture full of sad regret,
That worried, wingéd thing; and yet
He 'd light betimes upon some tree
Where his green playground used to be
To rest his wearied little wing,
And there, despite his woe, he 'd sing!
He 'd sing the only song he knew.
His note was clear, his note was true,
And then back to the fight he 'd fly
Undaunted, blithe, and bright of eye!

TIME'S SAVINGS

He who gives to-day full measure
Finds his yesterdays a treasure
That no woes that overcome us
E'er can take completely from us —
Wealth secure, and full of blessing,
That is truly worth possessing.

November 5

WISE FOOLISHNESS

When some rocky path ye tread
Do your talkin' with your head,
But when sympathy is due
Let your old heart speak for you.
Who knows? Maybe some distress
Can be cured by foolishness
Better than the wisest plan
Ever yet devised by man.

YOUTH

Youth is lovely. Youth is fair.
Youth hath such a bonny air,
And I love it when it glows
With the color of the rose
On the cheek of maid and man
In the heyday of life's span.
But youth 's in its sweetest stage
When within the heart of Age
Still it makes the sere day bright
With its ever-golden light.

RAPTURE

Withered leaves are dancing,
With the breezes prancing.
Harvest mows are smiling
With their stores beguiling.
Zephyrs swift are chaffing
With the brooklets laughing.
Autumn's stars are beaming
Through the crisp night gleaming.
Birds are southward winging
Full of joyous singing.
Hill, and vale, and river,
In the sunlight quiver.
Thrilling with thanksgiving
O'er the joy of living.

Guess I 'll try to capture
Some of all this rapture.
Nature must prepare it
For Mankind to share it!

DISTINCTIONS

Grant me much self-respect, but no conceit,
And may I ever see
Myself a man with honest pride replete,
With naught of vanity.

AS TO CERTAIN TACTICS

" Fight fire with fire." Yes, that 's effective,
But careful be of your objective.
You cannot cure a quarrel by " quar'ling,"
Nor thread a snarl by simply snarling.

THE USED-TO-BEE

Of all the bees that hum around
The best of all to me,
Whose honey 's sweetest, I have found
The good old " Used-To-Bee."

The sweets we 've stored are our reward,
Saved for a rainy day,
And keep us warm against the storm
Of troubles on our way.

So here 's to thee, old " Used-To-Bee,"
So rich in treasure-trove!
Long as I live, my thanks I 'll give
For all thy gifts of love.

THE FRUIT

Tears may fall — I 'm not complaining.
In my heart it 's simply raining,
And mayhap from out my woe
Something green will later grow
That will add unto my power
In some chance, emergent hour
To relieve the burden gray
Of some comrade gone astray!

A SUMMONS

Ho — let 's out upon the wing!
Somewhere some one 's suffering!
Sound the gong and clear the road!
On we come with loving load
Full of cheer and comradeship
For the soul in trouble's grip!

All the drowning 's not at sea.
Some on land poor swimmers be,
Going downward, helpless, lost,
In life's waters tempest-tost —
Lost for just a timely rope
Cast by love, and weft of hope!

November 13

THE DAYMAKER

I care not what the Weather Bureau says
From this time on I 'm making my own days,
And if without the tempests roar and spin,
If so I choose I 'll have sunshine within;
Or if I need the rain, and skies are bright,
I know just how to bring dark clouds in sight.
Though truth to tell I plan to specialize
On cheery days, with brilliant, sunny skies
A-gleam with joy, and leave the other style
For solemn folks who 'd rather frown than
smile.

AS TO PINING

The English tongue sometimes, I fear,
Would strike a man from Mars as queer.
For instance, when some people say,
" 'T is sad to see one pine away."
They do not know the kind of pine
That gladdens so this soul of mine
When I observe it front the ill
Of winter with its bitter chill,
Its green persistent in the face
Of every blast that comes apace;
Its head held high against the sky
Whatever tempest passes by;
And mid the blizzards as serene
As in the summer, soft and green.
It simply pines, and pines away,
And gathers strength day after day;
And stands erect whate'er may be,
And takes what comes unflinchingly.

How wondrous fine 't would be, I say,
If folks would only " pine " that way!

WHEN KINKS APPEAR

No matter if you think
The world is in a kink,
Just strike your proper gait
And keep your own path straight.

It won't be long before,
In footing up the score,
You 'll find past any doubt
The kink is straightened out.

AS TO WASTE

If all the waste were used, my dear,
Drear want would shortly disappear,
And not a soul in all the race
Would stand with hunger face to face,
If all the waste were used.

And this refers to sympathy
And tender, true humanity
For all the human brood, my dear,
And not alone to food, my dear,
If all the waste were used!

So, who 'll become a granary
For those that starve for sympathy,
And fill with food
The multitude
Whose souls grow faint for just a taste
Of that we 're letting run to waste,
But would be fed
And comforted,
If all the waste were used?

WAITING SMILES

All the worry in the world
 Never killed despair.
Trouble never yet was furled
 On the rod of care.

Grit your teeth, and steadily
 Plod your thorny road.
Some To-day will rectify
 Wrongs of yesterday.

Somewhere, somehow, there 'll be smiles
 Waiting on the road,
Easing off the weary miles,
 Lightening your load.

THE TEACHER

Woe came to me one day, and quietly we talked,
And when she went her way, my troubled path I walked
Contentedly, for she, despite her visage drear,
Had given unto me a vision bright and clear.

She pointed clearly out, unerringly and plain,
Just how it came about that I had suffered pain;
And while she 'd made me wan with trial and distress,
She helped me start upon the Road to Happiness.

There never was a good black night
That did not point the way to light!

ASSETS

I may possess no drossy treasure-trove,
But — I have love!
It may be in some lowering clouds I grope,
But — I have hope!
With love and hope to make my days secure,
My fortune 's sure.
Without them all the riches of the earth
Have little worth;
But with them, lacking gold, I still opine
Success is mine!

UNBOUND

Sometimes when feeling close confined
And shut within a narrow sphere,
It 's rather pleasing to my mind
To gaze off in the heavens clear,
And fancy that the earth is but
A front-seat at some wondrous show
Where I may sit and watch the strut
Of forces marching to and fro;
And when the play for me is done,
I 'll find at last a dwelling-place
In broad fields bounded by the sun,
The moon, the stars, and endless space.

A PRESCRIPTION

If you would check your trouble crop
 Just put old worry on the shelf,
And on this very instant stop
 A-sympathizing with yourself.

Self-sympathy 's a kind of care
That seldom lands us anywhere.

PAY AS YOU GO

Thanksgiving Day will soon be here,
But it has ever been my way,
And one that 's filled my soul with cheer,
To keep Thanksgiving every day.
It really helps a lot, you know,
To keep on paying as you go,
Not putting off till the account
Foots up to such a vast amount
That you 're not certain if your store
Is quite sufficient for the score.

WHEN THINGS ARE SPARSE

Don't grieve if haply you are thin!
 Remember, 't is no fable,
The fattest turkey 's first to win
 His place upon our table;
And oversleekness often brings
 A consequential guerdon
That makes the lot of lofty kings
 A mighty heavy burden.

COMING WINTER

There 's frost upon the window-pane,
 And bitter is the air.
The birds are winging south again,
 And chill is everywhere.
But 'gainst the rime of wintry days
 I 've stored within my soul
Enough of summer's sunny rays
 To ease my meed of dole.
And when it comes to chilly nights
 With tempests fierce a-wing
I sleep, and dream of harbor lights
 About the Ports of Spring.

A PREFERENCE

In distant skies the gorgeous hues
 Of scintillating beauty glow,
And with their glories vast suffuse
 The drifting clouds that float below.
About me on the city streets
 A drab and sordid prospect lies,
And everywhere grim sorrow greets
 And fills with woe my watching eyes.

Yet would I dwell below with these
 Whose portion is but grim despair,
Not 'mongst those cloudland mysteries
 For all their glowing beauty rare.
For they 're but cloud-lands, after all,
 Adrift all aimlessly above;
While here below whene'er I call
 I find realities of love.

HEART-ZONES

I 've charted off my heart to-day
In quite a geographic way.
When some unhappy comrade falls
And for a speedy judgment calls
The Zone called Temperate I 'll use
In reckoning his final dues.
When anger comes to vex my path
And vengeful thoughts lead on to wrath,
The Arctic Zone will cool me off
And at my mad impulses scoff;
And when there 's need for sympathy,
The Torrid Zone will do for me.
Thus will my heart in thought and deed,
And kindly impulse serve my need.

RELIEF IN RHYME

When matters go askew sometimes
I find much help in making rhymes.
For instance, when I darkly grope
It helps a lot to think of "hope."
And when the night is black as "ink"
It helps to think that dawn is "pink."
When scenes are steeped in misery
I like to dwell on "charity."
"Glad" rhymes with "sad," and "light" with "night,"
While "plight" and "spite" suggest "delight,"
And as for "jeer," and "sneer," and "fear,"
My rhyming scheme leads on to "cheer."

Just try it when your days are "blue."
Your rhyme may show that "skies are, too."

THE PARADOX

If you have a thought of glee,
 Just some little note of cheer,
Wander forth right speedily,
 Pour it in some comrade's ear.

If you have a thought of dread,
 Of some evil you must read,
Keep it close within your head,
 In your spirit buried deep.

Of your joys spend lavishly.
 Be a miser with your fear.
What you spend will multiply;
 What you hoard will disappear!

ALWAYS READY

When all about me rush like mad,
And push and shove in wild abandon,
Amid the turmoil I am glad
That I 've two sturdy legs to stand on.

And if caught in that onward smash
They overturn me as they fly on,
It comforts me as down I crash
To think that I 've my back to lie on.

MY KINGDOM

Who 'd be a king when he can be
A man that 's free?
Who 'd bend beneath his pompous load
And lose the road?
Who 'd cherish stores of yellow dross
Involving loss
Of love, and freedom, and the greens
Of peaceful scenes?
Not I! The only king I 'd be
Is king of Me,
Lord of Myself, and Master of my Soul —
That is my goal!

December 1

THE LAST CHAPTER

Now comes the final chapter of the year.
The last days of its span are flying fast.
We balance up our books in woe and cheer.
The totals of our loss and profit cast.

For me, in looking back, I choose to dwell
On sunny days that stand in bold relief,
And of their many happinesses tell,
With eyes tight-closed to every hour of grief.

Thus grows the retrospect in joy, and I
Approach another turning of life's page
Unvexed to think that I am passing by
A further milestone on the path to age.

HOLY DAYS

Yes, December 's cold and gray,
And the birds have flown away,
 Leaving us to wintry stress,
But ourselves can change the scene
With the tints of summer green
 With the brush of kindliness.

Soon the holidays we 'll see,
Full of mad hilarity,
 Full of joys delirious —
By some act of kindness done
We can make them every one
 Truly Holy Days for us!

TOGETHER

No matter what the kind of weather,
The fairest path I know 's " Together,"
When through some bright or cloudy strand
Two lovers walk it, hand in hand.

E'en though we cannot join them there
The sight of them is passing fair,
Just as we joy in sunset hues
Which we may gaze on, but not use.

THE FIRES OF FRIENDSHIP

Blow on, ye wintry blasts! Ye vex me not.
I 'm poor in coin, maybe, but rich in friends,
And every bitter ill that thou hast got
In Friendship's face incontinently ends.

The fires of comradeship are constant, true.
They burn for aye, despite thy wintry rue,
And ne'er an ice-woe from the arctic day
Can stand before the glow of such as they.

THE LAGGARD

Time often drags, but why complain, forsooth?
What though his onward step 's not faster, stronger?
The slower he to pass, we hold our youth
The longer!

THE SECRET

If we could only understand the language of
the breeze,
And grasp the inner meaning of the whisp'-
rings of the trees,
I 'm sure the message they 'd impart would
drive away all fear,
And bid us be right strong of heart, and hold
it full of cheer.

I 'm sure they 'd bid us note how quick the
storm clouds drift away,
And how no mist can e'er persist before the
smile of day,
And when Life's secret stands revealed in all
its blessed truth
We 'd find it in the blissful fact of Love's
eternal youth.

December 7

FRIENDLY NATURE

When in my troubles sunny days come by
I look on them as gifts from up on high
To cheer me in the hour of my rue,
And bid me hold my soul steadfast and true.
And if perchance the skies are full of rain,
And moaning winds fly over hill and plain,
They are not added woe, but proof to me
That in my stress I 've Nature's sympathy —
As tears, and sighs,
Of kindly friends show that they sympathize.

FOR TO-DAY

Let this morning's motto be
Kindliness and Courtesy,
Smiles for all upon the way.
Then however bleak the day
I shall feel when it is over
Like a bee amid the clover,
Gathering honey all day long,
Humming out my life in song.

December 9

THE DEMONSTRATION

To make your faith
No spectral wraith,
Just found your creed
Not on the word but on the deed.

The more 't is used
In deeds suffused
And put into
The little things you daily do,

The more 't will grow;
And ere you know
'T will gather strength,
And finally 't will turn at length,

The more you act,
Into a fact
So plain that you
Will never have to prove it true.

PROFITABLE LOSS

Ofttimes in bargains involving dross
I 've found the profit was wholly loss,
And other times in my bitter pain
I 've found my loss in the end was gain.

Wherefore it seems that the thing to do
When lowering troubles loom into view
Is to see what use we can put 'em to,
And turn the losses that there impend
Into some kind of a dividend!

THE HARVEST

Without, I grant, I show my age,
 But deep within I 'm young as ever.
Let hoary Time turn page on page
 And rush along in mad endeavor
To prove me old! I 'll merely laugh,
 His scythe and hour-glass defying.
Love's wheat is mine — his share 's the chaff
 Of arbitrary days a-flying!

NOT WHITHER BUT WHERE

Where we 're to be some day 't were quite
as well
To leave unto the verdict of our star.
'T were wiser much for us to rest a spell
And take a daily reckoning to tell
Us where we are.

Foresight is fine, yet thinking on to-morrow,
Neglectful of the chances here to-day,
Is like to living on the sweets we borrow
Unmindful of the fruit along the way.

December 13

UPSTREAM

Never mind the rocky bed,
Or the rapids round you spread,
Grip your oars and pull ahead!

Never mind the rushing tide,
Nor the whirling pools that hide
'Neath the stream on every side.

Heed ye not the currents strong
Setting toward the ports of wrong,
Grip your oars and pull along.

Let your sweep be broad and true
On the course that sets into
Harbors fair that wait for you.

Head-winds blow, and false lights gleam!
Hard is rowing 'gainst the stream,
But the prizes are supreme!

Where head-waters bubble free
There the fountain-sources be
Of the powers of the sea!

NEVER FAILING

No matter how the winds are humming
It 's always true that summer 's coming.
It 's coming any time of year,
In spring the fair, in winter drear;
When bees are humming,
Or blasts are strumming
With sleet or rain
Upon your pane,
It 's always coming, coming, coming,
And some day 't will be here
With all its warmth and cheer
To share its treasures joyously
With you and me!

THE UPWARD WAY

Whose soul shall rise above the cloud
That blights the path that must be run
Will reach the realms with bliss endowed
Where shines the everlasting sun.
Put rein and bridle on the mist,
And ride oblivious to care,
And on the upward way persist —
The light is surely waiting there.

IN THE DEPTHS

Deeper than reason, deeper than mind,
Down in the depths of my spirit I find
Senses of vast and ungraspable things
Stirring the soul like a flutter of wings,
Filling my heart with a faith in a day
Far in the future, yet here in a way,
Blest with the light of a Fatherly face,
Loving of eye, and a-glowing with grace,
Bidding me enter of sorrows all free
Into the home that is waiting for me.
That is the faith in my spirit I find,
Deeper than reason, deeper than mind,
Senses of love, and ineffable things,
Stirring my soul like a flutter of wings!

AS TO RESENTMENT

Resentment? Nay, my friend — it 's not
worth while.
A thousand frowns are n't worth a single
smile,
And as for me I have no time to spare
For going round with a resentful air,
When everywhere I look I see some chance
To greet a fellow man with loving glance
To help him on, and make the road I run
A brighter one,
And give the highways dark that lie ahead
That I must tread
Some of the radiant sweetness of the sun.

THE SURPLUS

If so your cup
With joy fills up
That it is over-brimming,
Pray keep in sight
The hapless wight
In difficulties swimming.

Just take the waste
You cannot taste
To some poor soul in sorrow.
I 'm quite inclined
To think you 'll find
Your stock increased to-morrow

HEAD AND HEART

When Heart says " Do," and Head says
" Don't,"
And Will 's inclined to say " I won't! "
It may be wrong to follow Heart
And from the paths of Head depart,
But all the same I 've heard much song
On roads wise Head hath branded wrong,
And sooner found the light that 's true
On byways Heart hath brought to view!

THE DIVIDEND

To-day my banner is unfurled,
 And forth I go
 To scenes of woe,
To add unto the glory of the world
 By some good deed
 For those in need:
To dry the tears in some one's eyes;
To drive the clouds from some one's skies;
And on my sturdy shoulders bear
The burden of some other's care;
And when at e'en the sunset falls
On distant hills, on city walls,
In all its splendor, rich, divine,
Some of its radiance will be mine!

A YEAR AGO

Now where was I a year ago?
Enmeshed in just what net of woe?
Blest if I know!
Hence naught of tribute shall I pay
To any trouble here to-day.
A year will shortly pass away,
And every fear
At present here,
Just as that woe of yesteryear,
Will lie forgot, unless I choose
To cherish it, which I refuse!

THE HOLLY WREATH

The holly wreath 's a joyous sight
To cure us of despond,
And it is made exactly right
To let us look beyond —
Beyond the scenes of gladsome mirth
That all about us be,
Into those other scenes of earth
And opportunity.

The berry's glow amid the green
Speaks of that jewelled day
When love whose like was never seen
Dawned on our mortal way;
And through the spaces garlanded
We look upon God's poor,
And find the path before us spread
To make His love secure!

GIFTS

If you have the gift of song,
Use it, use it, all day long!

If you have the gift of mirth,
Let it gladden all the earth!

If you have the gift of cheer,
Let it echo loud and clear!

If you have stores of content,
Be its joys on others spent;

And your Christmas dividend
Will be good will without end!

AS TO SANTA CLAUS

'T is quite the fad these days of doubt
To put old Santa on the shelf;
But you can put such doubt to rout
By being Santa Claus yourself!
So sling your pack
Upon your back,
And seek the hovels poor and mean
Where Santa Claus is seldom seen,
And take the souls that there abide
Their portion of the Christmastide.

December 25

HIGH FESTIVAL

Now let the chimes that sweetly ring
 Upon the frosty morning air
Surcease from every trouble bring
 To grateful spirits everywhere,
And as the coming of the Lord
 Brought hope of grace to sinners all,
Let every heart, with one accord,
 Rejoice in His High Festival,
 And spread good will
 O'er dale and hill;
And where in darkness some may grope
Illume their paths with rays of hope,
Until e'en regions of distress
Beam with the light of happiness!

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

Give me the eyes to see my brother's woe;
Grant me the vision that perceives his care,
That I, amid my Christmas joys, may go
And take some touch of mitigation there.

God point the way that I may quickly find
His acre waiting for the glad relief,
And ope my eyes that I may not be blind
To tasks of love that ease the sting of grief.

THE EVER YOUNG

Let the short days run,
And the years fly by,
And the blazing sun
Speed across the sky.
What need you care for his path of ruth
If your heart holds fast to the joys of youth?

Let your locks grow white,
And your brow be lined,
In the swift sped flight
Of the years behind.
Why vex your soul as they run along
If your heart still rings with a youthful song?

Let the minutes race,
And the old clock tell
Of their madcap pace
With its mellowed bell.
Age cannot touch, nor its sorrows sear
The spirit that holds to its youthful cheer.

LEGAL TENDER

Give me gold to pay my debts —
Gold or silver, I don't care.
When they 're gone I 've no regrets
That no longer they are there.

But when I would seek content,
Peace and life's felicity,
Dross hath little blandishment.
Love the mintage is for me!

YESTERDAY, TO-DAY, AND TO-MORROW

How very fair to-morrow looks, and O how very dear
The memories of yesterday to most of us appear!
Ah, well, my friend, remember as you run along your way,
To-day was once to-morrow, and will soon be yesterday.
Let 's keep it fair as we have dreamed, and as we pass along,
'T will make another yesterday all bright and full of song.

WINTER

When Winter in her frosty pride
Puts on a lot of pompous side,
And loudly blows,
It really makes me want to laugh
As I reflect on how much chaff
Lies in her pose.

The fact is — and a rose I knew
Last summer told me, and it 's too —
Too good to keep —
She 's not a queen of lofty birth,
But just a nurse to watch the earth
While it 's asleep!

A mighty good one though is she,
And does her duty faithfully,
Despite her way.
Were earth to lose her snowy drifts
We 'd sadly miss the floral gifts
Of smiling May!

THE PASSING YEAR

Another year hath gone and added to your age?
Nay, 't is not so, my friend — you 've turned another page
In Life's great story book, and now before your eyes
Another chapter lies,
To tell us all alike, the patriarch and youth,
How run the blessed paths that lead us on to truth!





